This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

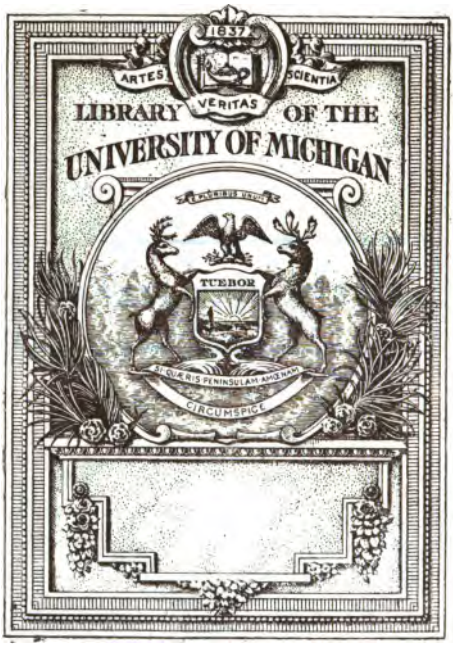
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`


1837
ARTES
SCIENTIA
VERITAS
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
TUEBOR
SI QUAERIS PENINSULAM AMOENAM
CIRCUMSPICE

TRACTS

ON

POLITICAL

AND

OTHER SUBJECTS,

PUBLISHED AT VARIOUS TIMES

BY

JOSEPH TOWERS, L.L.D.

AND NOW FIRST COLLECTED TOGETHER,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

Printed for T. CADELL, Jun. and W. DAVIES (Succeſſors to T. CADELL), in the Strand; C. DILLY, in the Poultry; J. JOHNSON, in St. Paul's Church-yard; G. G. and J. ROBINSON, and T. EVANS, in Pater-noſter-row; and J. DEBRETT, in Piccadilly.

MDCCXCVI.

CONTENTS

OF THE

THIRD VOLUME.

X.

THOUGHTS on the COMMENCEMENT of a NEW PARLIAMENT: With an APPENDIX, containing REMARKS on the LETTER of the Right Hon. EDMUND BURKE, on the REVOLUTION in FRANCE.

XI.

A DIALOGUE between an ASSOCIATOR and a WELL-INFORMED ENGLISHMAN, on the Grounds of the late ASSOCIATIONS, and the Commencement of a WAR with FRANCE.

XII.

REMARKS on the CONDUCT, PRINCIPLES, and PUBLICATIONS, of the ASSOCIATION at the CROWN and ANCHOR, in the Strand, for preſerving Liberty and Property againſt REPUBLICANS and LEVELLERS.

XIII.

An ESSAY on the LIFE, CHARACTER, and WRITINGS, of DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

THOUGHTS

THOUGHTS

ON THE

COMMENCEMENT

OF A

NEW PARLIAMENT:

WITH

An APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

REMARKS on the LETTER of the Right Hon. EDMUND BURKE, on the REVOLUTION IN FRANCE.

[FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1790.]

[SOME time after this Tract was first printed, an account of it was published in the MONTHLY REVIEW; and, in the course of it, the following remarks were made by the writers of that Literary Journal: "The merits of "Dr. TOWERS, as a judicious and candid po- "litical writer, are already well known to the "public. His present performance discovers "the same ardent and enlightened zeal for "liberty, undebased by any narrow party views "or attachments; the same liberal desire of "extending to others, of every description, "that freedom of thought, speech, and action, "which he claims for himself; the same en- "larged, and truly patriotic, love of his country, "unaccompanied with any mean wish to depress "or injure the country of his neighbours, the "same manly openness of sentiment, unmixed "with any rude personalities, or offensive cen- "sures; and the same perspicuity of style; "which have distinguished his former publica- "tions."] MONTHLY REVIEW for February, 1791, Vol. IV. of the New Series, p. 226.

THOUGHTS

ON THE COMMENCEMENT OF A

NEW PARLIAMENT.

FEW periods in the history of mankind have been more diſtinguiſhed than the preſent, by great, important, and intereſting events. The moſt ſignal, and the moſt unexpected revolutions have taken place. An ardent

and enlightened zeal for the great intereſts of mankind has been manifeſted, in different parts of the globe, and has produced the moſt ſalutary conſequences. It has been diſplayed even among thoſe, who had long been enured to the galling chains of deſpotiſm, and who ſeemed to have almoſt totally forgotten their rights as men, and their claims as citizens.

Among theſe events, the late revolution in France is one of the moſt conſpicuous and ſtriking. The tranſition was ſo great, and ſo extraordinary, from ſuch a deſpotic government as that which had long prevailed in that kingdom, to ſo free a conſtitution as that which is now eſtabliſhed, that it could not but arreſt the attention of all, who were not wholly regardleſs of the tranſactions of foreign nations, or of the great intereſts of mankind. It afforded a ſublime pleaſure to the friends of liberty,

of

of virtue, of human happineſs, to ſee a great nation ſhaking off its fetters, compelling its rulers to acknowledge the juſt claims of the people, and aſſerting the rights of men, in the nobleſt and the fulleſt manner.

FROM the high ſentiments of liberty, which have appeared for ſome years paſt among French writers, there was much reaſon to hope, that ſome change, favourable to the people, would, by degrees, take place in the government of France. But no man expected ſuch a revolution, as that which has actually been effected. I muſt at the ſame time remark, that, as an Engliſhman, I cannot but feel conſiderable pleaſure at the reflection, that ſome of the eminent writers of my own country have greatly contributed to diffuſe that ſpirit of freedom, which has lately been exhibited in different parts of Europe, as well as on the other ſide of the Atlantic. The French

nation

nation have had the generosity to acknowledge this; and much of that flame of liberty, which has characterized the Americans of the present age, was undoubtedly derived from the mother-country, and from that light and knowledge, which were communicated to the British colonies from the LOCKES and the SYDNEYS of England. But, unhappily, at a period when English writers are illuminating the world, and contributing to its emancipation from tyranny, much of the antient spirit of liberty appears in England itself to be evaporated, and we seem in this respect to be greatly degenerating from our ancestors. A spirit of court servility, and an implicit confidence in the minister, without any just grounds, have lately become so prevalent, that there is too great reason to apprehend, that we have lost much of that vigi-

vigilance in the ſupport of public freedom, which is eſſential to its preſervation.

At a period, when the moſt ſplendid ſcenes have been exhibited in France, and the nobleſt ſentiments diſplayed among many of the virtuous and enlightened inhabitants of that kingdom, an Engliſhman, ſincerely attached to the honour and to the intereſt of his country, cannot but be in a very high degree ſolicitous, that Great Britain may yet continue to preſerve that honourable ſtation, which ſhe has long held among the nations of the earth; and that ſhe may ſtill be diſtinguiſhed, not only by her wealth, her extended commerce, and her love of literature, of ſcience, and of arts, but by the freedom of her conſtitution, her averſion to every ſpecies of tyranny, and an unconquerable reſolution to aſſert and to maintain the rights of human nature.

I REJOICE in the freedom of FRANCE; I rejoice, that ſo great and reſpectable a nation has recovered its liberties; I hope, that they will be confirmed in the fulleſt manner; and that no untoward events, no fickleneſs of the people, nor any iniquitous interpoſition of foreign powers [1], will in any degree impede and retard their complete eſtabliſhment. But I wiſh, at the ſame time, that GREAT BRITAIN may ſtill continue free; that its inhabitants may not degenerate from the virtues of their anceſtors; that our political conſtitution may be improved; and that the wiſeſt and beſt meaſures may be adopted for the promotion of the real intereſts of the people.

IT is from reflexions and ſentiments like theſe, that I have been led to view, with ſome degree of ſolicitude, the Commence-

[1] No foreign power had interfered, at leaſt not openly, when this tract was firſt publiſhed.

ment

ment of the Seventeenth Parliament of Great Britain. At the ſame time, I am willing to cheriſh the hope, that notwithſtanding ſome ſtrong ſymptoms of political degeneracy, which have lately been too manifeſt among us, yet that there may ſtill be found ſufficient energy, ſpirit, and virtue, among the people and the parliament, not only to maintain our antient rights, but to reform the defects in our conſtitution, and ſtill farther to advance the freedom, and the felicity of our country.

When I view the tranſactions of the laſt parliament, I am very far from finding it entitled to that applauſe, which has ſometimes been beſtowed upon it; and it will give me great pleaſure, when ſufficient evidence is afforded to the public, that the new repreſentatives of the people have more virtue than their predeceſſors, and that they are ſincerely deſirous of doing,

not

not merely their own buſineſs, or that of the miniſter, but the buſineſs of the nation, and advancing its real intereſts. At the Commencement of a New Parliament, it muſt be highly proper for the members of it ſeriouſly to conſider, in what manner they ſhall beſt perform their duty to their conſtituents, and by what means they may render the moſt eſſential ſervices to their country. It may alſo reaſonably be preſumed, that ſuch of the members of it as are really well-diſpoſed, and who entered into parliament, not merely for their own private ends, but for the ſervice of the public, will receive with candour, and with ſuch attention as they may deſerve, any hints that may appear to be calculated for the promotion of theſe great and important ends, from whatever quarter they may come.

In the tranſactions of the laſt Parliament, the debates and proceedings relative to the appointment of a Regency, may be conſidered as among the moſt important. But, in ſpeaking on this ſubject, I muſt confeſs, that I was one of thoſe who were not ſatisfied with the conduct of either party. It was too manifeſt, that the object of the two great leading parties was much more the acquiſition of power, than any real attachment to the welfare of the Nation, or to the principles of the Conſtitution. Indeed, in the courſe of the debates concerning the Regency, we heard much of the King's party, of the Queen's party, and of the Prince of Wales's party; but no man heard any thing of the party of the People. Nor were the juſt claims of the People ever fairly, fully, and unequivocally aſſerted, in either houſe, during the courſe of the debates upon the ſubject.

Or

Of Mr. Pitt's queſtions reſpecting the regency, which were voted by the parliament, that which aſſerted the right of parliament, as the repreſentatives of the people, to appoint a regency, I entirely approved. The doctrine, that the prince of Wales was to ſucceed of courſe to the regency, or that the parliament were to be conſidered merely as a court in which his right was to be recognized, appeared to me to be totally adverſe to all the great principles of the conſtitution. But the appointment of a commiſſion, under the great ſeal, to give the royal aſſent to a regency bill, I could view in no other light than as a miſerable fiction, invented for the occaſion, in order to avoid the appearance of making the executive power originate, where it ought ever to originate, from the authority of the people. The eſtabliſhment alſo that was to have been made, in caſe a regency

had

had taken place, was to have been rendered, by the miniſter's plan, unneceſſarily expenſive to the nation, and was obviouſly calculated for the maintenance of his own influence and power.

AMONG the cenſurable tranſactions of the laſt Parliament, the exorbitant extenſion of the EXCISE is entitled to particular attention. It ought to have excited a greater national alarm, and a more vigorous and general oppoſition, than were produced by it. Without ſpeaking of the act for exciſing wine, which was juſtly liable to very ſtrong objections, I ſhall only obſerve, that Mr. Pitt's Tobacco Bill was at leaſt as pernicious, and as unconſtitutional, as that which had nearly, and very deſervedly, driven Walpole from the helm of power. It is impoſſible for any impartial man to read this voluminous act, which conſiſts of more than one hundred and

ſixty clauſes, and many of the regulations of which are highly oppreſſive, without a full conviction, that it is an act which ought never to have taken place in a free country. The advocates for ſuch laws as theſe are apt to urge, in their vindication, the neceſſities of the ſtate; but it does not follow, that becauſe money is wanted by the government, that therefore little regard is to be paid to the principles of the conſtitution. No man, who will reflect coolly and impartially upon the ſubject, can poſſibly doubt, but that taxes, and efficient taxes, may be raiſed by other and more conſtitutional modes of taxation. But there will be an end to the liberties of England, if the people ſuffer their rights to be repeatedly and wantonly invaded, under the pretence of raiſing a revenue. Whatever may be the wants of government, it is the duty of the repreſentatives of the people to oppoſe

every

every bill that is calculated to undermine the public liberty. As to the laws of exciſe, the permanency of this mode of taxation, which has a tendency to render the crown leſs dependent on the parliament; the power that it gives to officers of the crown to enter the houſes of men at their own pleaſure, and without any warrant from a civil magiſtrate; the great increaſe which it occaſions of revenue officers appointed by the crown, and acting under its influence; the deprivation of the ſubject, in exciſe cauſes, of the right of trial by jury; theſe, and various other circumſtances, render the exciſe highly dangerous, and very inconſiſtent with the genius of a free nation. Indeed, I am fully convinced, that whenever the great body of the people of this country ſhall be ſufficiently enlightened upon the ſubject, they will ſay, with a firm and decided tone, We will have no

farther Extenſion of the Exciſe. Perhaps few inſtances have occurred, in the hiſtory of miniſters and of parliaments, of greater miniſterial arrogance, and miniſterial obſtinacy, than were exhibited in carrying the late Tobacco Bill through the two houſes, in oppoſition to the ſtrongeſt and the fulleſt evidence of the miſchievous tendency of the act, which appears not only to be highly pernicious and dangerous in a conſtitutional light, but manifeſtly calculated to diminiſh the tobacco trade of the country, and eventually to injure the national revenue.

INDEPENDENTLY of the general pernicious tendency of the exciſe, I have obſerved, both in the laſt and preceding Parliaments, that, in framing new revenue laws, a proper attention has not been paid to the convenience and accommodation of the ſubject, nor ſufficient pains taken to

prevent

prevent ſuch laws from being more burthenſome to the people than neceſſary. The ſubject has been left too much to the mercy of the miniſters of the crown, and was not protected, as he ought to have been, by the national repreſentatives. When a new revenue bill was brought in, the fabrication of it, and the clauſes of which it was compoſed, were left too much to the diſcretion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or perhaps to his ſecretary; and to them the perſons intereſted often found it neceſſary to apply, in order to obtain ſome mitigation, or alteration, of any new impoſition. But the merchants and traders of this country have not that ſecurity which they ought to have, if, when a new law is framing, which may materially affect their intereſts, they are obliged to have recourſe, not to Parliament, or to a Committee of Parliament, but to the Chancellor of

the Exchequer. Whenever this is the caſe, it is manifeſt, that the repreſentatives of the people do not diſcharge their duty to their conſtituents. But a due attention ought to be paid to the accommodation of the ſubject, both by adminiſtration and by parliament. Taxes are levied for the benefit of the community at large; and they ought to be levied in that manner which is leaſt burthenſome to the ſubject. The idea that nothing is to be attended to but the revenue, and that little regard is to be paid to the convenience of the people, is an idea that can never enter the head of any miniſter of a truly great and liberal mind.

The Commutation Act is one of thoſe meaſures, for which great applauſe has been given to the preſent Chancellor of the Exchequer. The ſuppreſſion of ſmuggling was certainly a very deſirable object; but I do not think, that the mode

by

by which it was effected, or attempted to be effected, is entitled to much commendation. A tax that tends to exclude light and air from ordinary habitations, that is calculated to leſſen the healthfulneſs and the beauty of the edifices of a country, is ſubſtantially a bad tax; and the revenue raiſed by it is not a compenſation for the evil. The ſame money might undoubtedly be levied under ſome other denomination, and with leſs injury to the public.

In the laſt, as well as in preceding parliaments, the miniſter of the crown was generally permitted to take the lead, even apparently, in a much greater degree than could be approved, by thoſe who had adopted correct ideas of the conſtitution. The father of the preſent miniſter is reported to have ſaid in the houſe of commons, that there was a certain modeſty in that houſe, which did not eaſily ſuffer itſelf

to contradict a miniſter; and I obſerved in the laſt houſe of commons, that it ſeemed to be thought very improper to commence any buſineſs of importance, unleſs the miniſter were preſent. Indeed, the manner in which the houſe often waited for his appearance, as if they could do nothing but under his direction, appeared to me to be very unſuitable to the dignity of a Britiſh Houſe of Commons. I hope, that the honour of the houſe, and of the nation, will be more attended to in the preſent Parliament; and that the repreſentatives of the people will be of opinion, that they have a right, and that it is their duty, to do the buſineſs of the public, whether the miniſter of the crown chooſes to be in his place, or not; and that they will be much more inclined to receive the inſtructions of their conſtituents, than to attend to the dictates of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

ONE circumſtance, which deſerves attention in our late Parliaments, and eſpecially the laſt, is the extenſion of the ſeſſions to ſo late a ſeaſon of the year, that the generality of the members have wholly quitted the buſineſs of the houſe, long before the cloſe of the ſeſſion, in order to retire to their ſeats in the country. The fifth ſeſſion of the laſt Parliament was not cloſed till the 11th of July, and the ſixth not till the 11th of Auguſt. But this extenſion of the ſeſſion to ſo late a period, though in a conſtitutional view it may, unleſs in a caſe of real emergency, be regarded as a conſiderable evil, is a great advantage to a miniſter who wiſhes to carry any improper bills through the two houſes. As moſt of the independent members have then ceaſed to give their attendance, the miniſter has an opportunity of carrying his moſt obnoxious meaſures, in thin houſes, with much

much more facility, than if the ſeſſion were cloſed at an earlier period of the year. This is probably the real cauſe of the ſeſſion being extended ſo far into the ſummer; for otherwiſe, it would certainly be more convenient for the members, and better for the public, that the Parliament ſhould aſſemble at the beginning of November, and then enter upon buſineſs, than have the ſeſſion extended to July or Auguſt. But placemen and penſioners are obliged to attend even in the dog-days; and if the more independent members are in a remote part of the country, or too far from the metropolis to attend the Parliament, the buſineſs of the miniſter will not be neglected, whatever may become of the buſineſs of the public. Mr. Pitt's firſt Tobacco bill was paſſed in Auguſt, 1789. Indeed, though the ſeſſions of Parliament have lately been carried ſo far into the year, ſo

little

little attention has ſometimes been paid to the real intereſts of the nation, that the people have had reaſon to rejoice when the Parliament broke up; becauſe no additional impoſitions could be laid upon the public, nor any new laws paſſed to the injury of the conſtitution, till the commencement of another ſeſſion.

Of the various objects, which ſeem proper to engage the attention of a new Parliament, one of the moſt important is, a REFORM OF THE REPRESENTATION of the people in the houſe of commons. Mr. Pitt once made ſtrong profeſſions of great zeal for ſuch a reform. But theſe profeſſions are now forgotten, and this zeal has no longer any exiſtence. Indeed, the plan of a parliamentary reform, which was propoſed by Mr. Pitt, never appeared to me to be a good one; and that it was not ſo, I know to have been the opinion

of

of many, who had thought much upon the ſubject. But whatever the merits of his plan might be, he has now totally abandoned it. When a motion was made by Mr. Flood, in the laſt ſeſſion of the laſt Parliament, for "leave to bring in a bill "to amend the preſent repreſentation of "the people in the houſe of commons," Mr. Pitt manifeſted an extreme diſlike to any diſcuſſion of the ſubject, and even applauded ſome of the moſt contemptible ſophiſtry that was ever delivered in parliament, which was then advanced with a view of convincing thoſe members, who could not diſtinguiſh between the groſſeſt fallacies and ſound reaſoning, that there was no occaſion for any reform whatever.

When nine tenths of the people of this country have no votes in the elections of members of Parliament, when ſo great a part

of

of the nation are conſtantly taxed without being repreſented, and obliged to obey laws to which they have never aſſented, it is in the higheſt degree abſurd to pretend, that the repreſentation is not inadequate, or that a reform is not neceſſary. But the miniſter is at preſent, it ſeems, of opinion, that it is not yet the proper time; and we have abundant reaſon to believe, that it never will be the proper time, till a great part of the people ſhall have ſpirit and underſtanding enough to demand, as their undoubted, their unqueſtionable right, a more juſt and equal repreſentation in Parliament. Whenever that period ſhall arrive, the miniſter, whoever he be, however reluctantly, will find that it is a proper time. In the mean while, the friends of this great, this important, this neceſſary renovation of the conſtitution, ſhould adopt every proper meaſure for effectuating ſuch a re-

a reform; and ſhould never loſe ſight of this great object, from a full conviction, that a reform in Parliament is eſſential to the ſecurity, and to the eſtabliſhment of Britiſh freedom. But beſides a reform in the repreſentation, the ſeptennial act, which was originally a flagrant violation of the rights of the people, ought alſo to be repealed. If the elections of members of Parliament were more frequent, the ſentiments of the people would undoubtedly be more attended to, both by their repreſentatives, and by the miniſter.

AMONG other violations of the principles of the conſtitution, and of thoſe of juſtice and humanity, under which a part of the people of this country ſometimes labour, and which it would be highly proper for a new Parliament to take into conſideration, one is, the practice of IMPRESSING SEAMEN. This aſſumed power, in its

its own nature, and from the manner in which it is exercised, is totally repugnant to every idea of liberty and justice; nor can any principles of national policy be urged, which, when examined, will amount to a justification of this outrage on humanity. Such, indeed, is the enormity of the practice, that it would, I believe, be found, if the matter were fairly and fully investigated, that a much greater degree of violence, injustice, and oppression, have been exercised upon British subjects, in consequence of the press-warrants lately issued by the Lords of the Admiralty, than have been suffered from the Spaniards by any subjects of the British government, in those transactions which have been expected to give rise to a war between the two nations. If this be the fact, and I believe that an accurate examination would demonstrate it to be so, some other mode of manning our

navy

navy ought ſurely to be adopted. It has been very diſhonourable to preceding Parliaments, that no more attention was paid to thoſe plans, which have been propoſed for manning the fleet, without having recourſe to the violent and unconſtitutional mode of impreſſing. But I hope, that the humanity and juſtice of the preſent Parliament will adopt proper methods for putting a ſtop to this moſt indefenſible practice. Beſides the cruelty with which impreſſing is attended, it is well known to be a very expenſive ſervice to the nation; and from all the information which I have been able to collect upon the ſubject, there is no reaſon to doubt, but that methods might be adopted, by which the fleet might be better manned, with equal expedition, and probably without more expence to the nation, than by the preſent practice of impreſſing. But if ſuch methods ſhould be found

found more expenſive, the expence ought to be ſubmitted to, rather than ſuffer a practice to continue, which is an indelible reproach to a free country.

In the preſent ſituation of Great Britain, oppreſſed with an immenſe debt, and with heavy taxes, almoſt without number, it certainly ſhould be one of the prime objects of a wiſe adminiſtration, carefully to avoid all unneceſſary wars. I do not mean, that the nation ſhould be tamely inſulted, or not aſſert, on every proper occaſion, its juſt rights; but that wars ſhould not haſtily be engaged in, for queſtions of mere punctilio; that, in the management of diſputes with foreign nations, ſome moderation ſhould be obſerved; and that no alliances ſhould be entered into, in Germany or elſewhere, that have a natural tendency to involve us in a continental war. In this view, I conſider the late Pruſſian treaty as in a

very high degree reprehenſible. In the treaty of defenſive alliance between the King of Great Britain and the King of Pruſſia, concluded at Berlin on the 13th of Auguſt, 1788, are the following ſtipulations: 'The two high contracting parties 'ſhall always act in concert for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity; and 'in caſe either of them ſhould be threatened with a hoſtile attack by any power 'whatever, the other ſhall employ, without delay, his moſt efficacious good offices for preventing hoſtilities, for procuring ſatisfaction to the injured party, 'and for effecting an accommodation in 'a conciliatory manner. But if theſe good 'offices ſhould not have the deſired effect, 'in the ſpace of two months, and either 'of the two high contracting parties ſhould 'be hoſtilely attacked, moleſted, or diſturbed, in "any of his dominions, rights,

"poſſeſ-

" poſſeſſions, or intereſts, or in any man-
" ner whatever, by ſea or by land, by any
" European power," the other contract-
ing party engages to ſuccour his ally,
without delay, in order to maintain each
other reciprocally " in the poſſeſſion of
" all the dominions, territories, towns,
" and places, which belonged to them
" before the commencement of ſuch hoſ-
" tilities." It would, perhaps, not be very eaſy to contrive a treaty, that ſhould be better calculated to involve Great Britain in an unneceſſary war, than that in which theſe ſtipulations are contained. What can Pruſſia do for England, that can be any compenſation for the hazard of being embroiled in a war, whenever any of the territories of the king of Pruſſia, ſo ſurrounded, and ſome of which have been obtained by ſuch queſtionable means, ſhall be attacked by any foreign power? That a

nation like that of England, ſo well able by its own ſtrength to defend all its own poſſeſſions, and ſo differently ſituated from the kingdom of Pruſſia, ſhould have patiently and ſilently acquieſced in ſuch a treaty, as that concluded at Berlin in 1788, is truly aſtoniſhing. A cloſe connexion with a military and a deſpotic monarch, like that of Pruſſia, ſo circumſtanced as to be always in danger of a war, cannot be beneficial to a commercial nation like Great Britain, which has little real occaſion to interfere in any of the diſputes upon the continent. Indeed, no treaty concluded with Pruſſia has ever been beneficial to Great Britain; nor do I believe that any ſuch treaty ever will be beneficial.

THE real motive for concluding the Pruſſian treaty, beſides a view to ſupport the late meaſures reſpecting Holland, ſeems to have been an attention to the preſerva-

tion

tion of the electorate of Hanover; which, if a war ſhould take place, may poſſibly be attacked; and which a king of Pruſſia, if his own dominions are not in too much danger, may have it in his power to defend. The electorate of Hanover has been conſidered, in ſome degree, as the private patrimony of the King; and, therefore, Britiſh miniſters have found it beneficial to themſelves, and that it tended to keep them in favour, and in power, to pay a particular attention to the real or ſuppoſed intereſts of that electorate, in order to gratify the private views or attachments of their royal maſter.

SOMETHING of this kind was foreſeen as probable, before the acceſſion of the preſent family; and, therefore, in an act paſſed in the twelfth year of the reign of king William, entitled, "An act for the "farther limitation of the crown, and bet-

" ter ſecuring the rights and liberties of the " ſubject," is the following clauſe: " That " in caſe the crown and imperial dignity of " this realm ſhall hereafter come to any " perſon, not being a native of the king- " dom of England, this nation be not " obliged to engage in any war for the " defence of any dominions or territories " which do not belong to the crown of " England, without the conſent of parlia- " ment[a]." By the ſpirit of this act it was undoubtedly intended, that if the Elector of Hanover ſhould ſucceed to the throne of England, no treaties ſhould be entered into with a view to the ſafety of any of the dominions of the King, as Elector of Hanover, which might eventually involve England in an unneceſſary war. But notwithſtanding this act, treaties have been repeatedly made, ſince the acceſſion of the

[a] Cay's Edition of the Statutes, Vol. II. p. 355.

preſent

preſent family, with a view to the electorate of Hanover, which have been extremely pernicious and expenſive to this country.

THE late king of Pruſſia, who had himſelf received enormous ſums from England, under the denomination of ſubſidies, takes notice, in one of the prefaces to his "Hiſtoire de mon Temps," of the profuſion with which Engliſh guineas had been ſquandered in continental connexions[3]; and he aſſerts, in another place, that his uncle, George II. "governed England according "to the intereſts of his Electorate[4]." Count Algarotti alſo, ſpeaking of that prince, ſays, "What the King has moſt at heart is cer-

[3] This preface was publiſhed in the MEMOIRE HISTORIQUE, &c. read by count Hertzberg to the royal academy at Berlin, on the 25th of January, 1787, and printed in that city the ſame year.

[4] Oeuvres Poſthumes, tom. I. p. 48. edit. Berlin, 1788.

" tainly his electorate of Hanover. This " is the compaſs that has uniformly guided " the wars of England, ſince the elevation " of the Houſe of Brunſwick to the throne " of that kingdom; and the preſervation " of this electorate will STILL CONTINUE " to be the ruling principle[5]." It would have been better for this country, and probably better for the electorate of Hanover, if, on the acceſſion of George I. to the throne of England, the electorate had been reſigned to one of the younger branches of the family. A ſtipulation of this kind would have been highly proper in the act of ſettlement.

IN juſtification of the late Pruſſian treaty, the preſervation of the balance of power in Europe will probably be urged. But I confeſs, that to me this appears to be no-

[5] Letters Military and Political, p. 101. ſecond edit.

thing

thing but a mere pretence; though it is not to be wondered at, that the fabricators of ſuch a treaty ſhould have recourſe to ſuch a pretence, when nothing more ſolid can be alleged in its juſtification. The balance of Europe is often a popular topic; but much that is ſaid upon this ſubject is very little founded upon any due conſideration of the real ſtate of things. The ſtate of Europe is ſo much changed from what it was ſome years ſince, that reaſonings relative to the balance of Europe, which might have ſome weight fifty years ago, are now totally inapplicable. The preſent king of Sweden has publiſhed a book, in which he has endeavoured to ſhew, that the political balance of Europe is in great danger from the power of Ruſſia; he has ſince concluded a treaty with the Empreſs of Ruſſia; and will probably now employ his induſtry in ſettling the balance of Europe, with as much

much juſtice and impartiality, as he has already ſettled the liberties of his own ſubjects[6]. The late king of Pruſſia, in a letter to the marquis D'Argens, ſpeaks of the balance of Europe in terms of ridicule; and obſerves, that "of this diſorderly balance "Mr. Pitt (lord Chatham) had not been "able to find the centre of gravity[7]." Indeed, the affairs of Europe are now ſo circumſtanced, that it is difficult for the acuteſt politician to determine, on what ſide the balance is likely to preponderate. This, however, we may certainly determine, that a nation deeply involved in debt, and bur-

[6] When this tract was firſt publiſhed, the king of Sweden above referred to, Guſtavus the Third, was living. By the moſt unjuſtifiable practices, he overturned the Swediſh conſtitution, which he had in the moſt ſolemn manner ſworn to defend, and eſtabliſhed a government nearly deſpotic. In 1792, he was aſſaſſinated.

[7] Oeuvres Poſthumes, tome X. p. 316.

thened

thened with heavy taxes, as Great Britain now is, ſhould engage in no war to which it is not compelled by neceſſity, or in any caſes but thoſe in which its intereſts are very eſſentially concerned.

As war may juſtly be conſidered as one of the greateſt of human calamities, it muſt be highly rational for any nation ſeriouſly to conſider, before the commencement of hoſtilities, whether they have a ſufficient reaſon to engage in war, whether their cauſe be founded upon juſtice, and whether they are likely to gain any important advantages, if the conteſt be finally decided in their favour. But, unfortunately, thoſe to whom it is chiefly left to determine, whether a war ſhall, or ſhall not take place, are the leaſt ſufferers by it; and, perhaps, even derive from it a conſiderable additional degree of power and influence. This conſideration may lead a ſpeculative man

man ſometimes to inquire, whether the power of making war and peace be not too great and important in its nature, to be ſo much confided to the diſcretion of the miniſter, and ſo entirely at the pleaſure of the crown. It is, indeed, underſtood, that the power which the Parliament poſſeſſes of withholding ſupplies is a ſufficient check upon the miniſters, and upon the crown; but it ſhould be remembered, that if war be declared, the nation is committed; and though the parliament may withhold ſupplies, it may be ſcarcely poſſible to return to peace, and yet preſerve the honour of the nation. Indeed, the truth is, that not only miniſters of ſtate, but the people of this country, have long been too fond of war. Many individuals derive advantage from it; but the great body of the people muſt always be ſufferers by it; and it is aſtoniſhing that a nation, ſo overwhelmed

with

with debts and taxes, ſhould not be more convinced of the pernicious conſequences of war, that they ſhould not be more deeply ſenſible of the calamities with which it is attended, and be leſs forward to engage in it.

One great evil which attends the power of making war and peace, and concluding treaties, being wholly veſted in the miniſters of the crown, is, that wars may be commenced, and treaties concluded, on maxims very inconſiſtent with the genius of a free people, and on principles totally repugnant to the real intereſts of the nation. It muſt be very unnatural in the inhabitants of a country, who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their ardent love of liberty, to engage in any wars to compel another nation to an implicit ſubmiſſion to the authority of their prince or ſovereign, and to countenance or conclude any treaties of

which

which this is the object. But there may be periods, when ſuch a conduct, however inconſiſtent with the wiſhes and the intereſts of the people of England, may be very congenial to the views of the court of England. It would certainly be more ſafe, honourable, and advantageous to the nation, that no regular war ſhould be commenced, nor any treaty concluded, but by the authority of parliament. A power might be granted to the crown, of employing the forces of the nation in its defence, in caſe of any immediate hoſtile attack; though neither the miniſter, nor the council, were inveſted with the power of iſſuing a formal declaration of war, unleſs by the ſanction and authority of parliament.

Much credit has been given to the preſent chancellor of the exchequer for his conduct reſpecting Holland; but, as it appears to me, with very little reaſon. I mean

not

not here to enter into a minute diſcuſſion of the ſubject; but I ſhall take the liberty of obſerving, that it is my opinion, in which I know I am not ſingular, that the conduct of Great Britain reſpecting Holland, in the diſputes between the republic, or a great part of the republic, and the ſtadtholder, was extremely unjuſt and indefenſible; and it will, I apprehend, be finally found to have been impolitic. There are opinions which obtain for a time, and which even become popular, and which afterwards are for ever abandoned: ſuch, I think, will be the event, reſpecting thoſe favourable ſentiments which have been entertained by many, of that mode of interference which was adopted by Great Britain, in the diſputes that ſubſiſted between a conſiderable part of the Dutch nation and the ſtadtholder.

THAT there were great defects in the conſtitution of the Dutch government, I readily admit; the government of the republic of Holland was too ariſtocratical; but regular and proper meaſures were taking by the Dutch patriots for the improvement of their conſtitution; and the beneficial effects of theſe meaſures have been prevented by the interference of Pruſſia and of Great Britain. Freedom is not now enjoyed in Holland. That the liberties of the Dutch nation ſhould, in any degree, have been leſſened, by the interpoſition, or the aſſiſtance, of Great Britain, I conſider as highly diſhonorable to my country. But, that this is the fact, will be doubted by no man, who ſhall impartially inveſtigate the ſubject. Whatever might have been the errors, whatever the inconſiſtencies in the conſtitution of Holland, the diſputes reſpecting the internal govern-

ment

ment of that republic ſhould not have been adjuſted by Pruſſian troops; and no interpoſition in this caſe could have been honourable to Great Britain, but that which ſhould have given the Dutch nation a fair and full opportunity of eſtabliſhing that mode of government, which was thought by themſelves to be moſt conducive to their real intereſts.

It has been ſuppoſed by many, that maxims of policy were a ſufficient apology for our conduct reſpecting Holland. But no maxims of policy can juſtify tranſactions that are flagrantly unjuſt; and I believe that the intereſts of nations, as well as of individuals, would eventually be beſt promoted by an adherence to the rules of juſtice. Whatever may be the politics of the ſtadtholder's court; whatever may be the private attachments of the prince of Orange and the king of England, from their conſanguinity;

there is no reaſon to believe, that any friendſhip is eſtabliſhed between the Britiſh and the Dutch nations; and, if a war ſhould take place, we ſhall probably derive little effectual aſſiſtance from the navy of Holland.

As the foreign politics of Mr. Pitt do not appear to be entitled to much commendation, neither do I think that he has any juſt claim to applauſe for his conduct reſpecting the internal government of this country. His adminiſtration has, indeed, been very far from being favourable to the intereſts of public liberty; and on various occaſions he has evinced, that he has little attachment to its principles. When a motion was made, by Mr. Powis, in 1786, in behalf of the inhabitants of Quebec, for leave to bring in a bill to amend the Quebec act, and to render the government of that colony more conſonant to the principles

of

of the Engliſh conſtitution, the motion was ſtrenuouſly oppoſed by Mr. Pitt. But the ſame year a new and very pernicious clauſe being introduced into the mutiny-bill, by which a greater number of perſons than formerly were ſubjected to military law, that clauſe found in Mr. Pitt a defender, and was accordingly carried. The eloquence of the chancellor of the exchequer was alſo very zealouſly employed, in 1787, in ſupport of the bill for farming the tax on poſt horſes[s], which was accordingly paſſed into a law, though extremely adverſe to the principles of the Engliſh conſtitution.

When a bill was brought into parliament by Mr. Marſham, "for ſecuring the "freedom of election, by excluding per-"ſons holding places in the navy and the

[s] Debrett's Parliamentary Regiſter, vol. XXII. p. 190, 191, 198.

" ordnance from voting for members of " parliament," it was very vehemently oppoſed by Mr. Pitt, who was of opinion, that though the influence of the crown, before he came into power, was too great, and had been very properly diminiſhed, yet that there was now no occaſion for any freſh diminution. The influence now, we may preſume, had paſſed into very good and ſafe hands, and there could be no reaſon for any farther doubt or diſtruſt upon the ſubject. It was in 1786, that Mr. Pitt brought in his bill for ſubjecting wine to the laws of exciſe; and on that occaſion he oppoſed a motion which was made by Mr. Beaufoy, and which would have rendered the act ſomewhat leſs pernicious, " for " giving to the ſubject, in all caſes of an " information exhibited in purſuance of " the bill, an optional right of being tried

" by

"by a jury of his peers [9]." But this would have been too great a compliment to the principles of liberty, and to the ſpirit of the conſtitution. The arguments employed by Mr. Pitt againſt the clauſe were remarkably ſophiſtical; but the houſe were too complaiſant to conſider any arguments of the miniſter in that light, and the clauſe was accordingly rejected.

THAT the preſent chancellor of the exchequer poſſeſſes eminent abilities cannot reaſonably be queſtioned; but that theſe abilities have been employed for the benefit of his country, I can perceive no evidence. The bulk of mankind are too apt to be deceived by ſpecious appearances. A man may have acquired a habit of ſpeaking plauſibly, and even eloquently in parliament, and be able to defend his meaſures

[9] Debrett's Parliamentary Regiſter, vol. XX. p. 335. &c.

with dexterity, and yet be a very bad miniſter of ſtate. It might have been a circumſtance fortunate for Mr. Pitt's future reputation, and probably much happier for his country, if he had continued longer out of office, and had had time to acquire a more correct knowledge of the principles of the Engliſh conſtitution, and a more ſincere attachment to it, than he appears hitherto to have attained. He has ſome of the faults of his illuſtrious father, but I do not find that he poſſeſſes his virtues. He has ſhewn the ſame inclination to be in office, and the ſame zeal for German continental connexions, when that zeal was favourable to a continuance in power; but we ſeek in vain for that energetic eloquence, for that generous enthuſiaſm, in ſupport of the rights of men, which were repeatedly diſplayed by the earl of Chatham.

THE

THE great and implicit confidence, which a conſiderable part of the nation ſeem, for ſome time paſt, to have had in Mr. Pitt, appears to me to have been totally deſtitute of any ſolid foundation. In ſaying this, I do not mean to ſpeak the language of any particular party; I am of no party, I never was of any party, but that of Freedom, and of my Country. But I think, that there has been much national deluſion, ſo far as it has been national, in the almoſt unbounded confidence that has been placed in the preſent chancellor of the exchequer. Several circumſtances, however, have greatly contributed to this partiality in his favour. He derived no inconſiderable degree of luſtre from the ſplendour of his father's character; and he appeared in parliament, at an early age, with great advantage. Before he came into power, he alſo exhibited very patriotic ſentiments; and when he entered

into office, an high degree of credit was given him on account of his youth, and the ſuppoſed purity of his intentions; though that ſpecies of faith, it may be preſumed, is now conſiderably leſſened. It was, indeed, certainly not natural to expect, in ſo young a man as Mr. Pitt, all the art and duplicity of an old and a practiſed miniſter. But his inexperienced youth was not without great and important aſſiſtance. In the ſcience of miniſterial management, and miniſterial manœuvres, he has undoubtedly derived very ſignal advantages from the ſagacious counſels of his tried and approved friends, Mr. Charles Jenkinſon, now lord Hawkeſbury, and Mr. Henry Dundas, two gentlemen whoſe political talents and merits have been long well known to the public.

Much has been ſaid relative to the proſperous ſtate, in which the nation is ſuppoſed

poſed to have been during the adminiſtration of Mr. Pitt. But it was not ſufficiently conſidered, that this has been chiefly the conſequence of the change from war to peace, which, by occaſioning an immenſe alteration in the public expences, muſt neceſſarily greatly improve the ſituation of the nation: and this would naturally have been the caſe, whoever had been miniſter. In truth, the fact appears to be, that whatever proſperous circumſtances the nation may be now in, are the reſult of the tranſition from war to peace, of the activity and induſtry of the people, the energy of the Engliſh character, the fertility of our ſoil, our extenſive commerce, our great national reſources, and the general excellency of our laws and conſtitution; and are, ſo far as I can diſcern, derived in no manner whatever from any meaſures that have originated in the wiſdom, or in the virtue

of

of Mr. Pitt. And as to his views and conduct reſpecting general freedom, the terms in which he has ſpoken of the French revolution, his enormous extenſion of the exciſe, his manner of treating the late motion for a reform in the repreſentation of the people in the houſe of commons, together with the ſentiments expreſſed by him on the application to parliament for a repeal of the Teſt and Corporation acts, appear to me to afford, when united, evidence of too deciſive a nature, that he is not a ſincere friend to the intereſts either of civil or of religious liberty; and that he is not a miniſter in whom the people, in any great queſtion reſpecting the rights of men, can place any rational dependance [10].

BESIDES

[10] Whatever doubts relative to Mr. Pitt might be entertained, at the time when this tract was firſt publiſhed, ALL DOUBTS reſpecting his views, his character, his principles, and his conduct, as a miniſter of

Besides the circumſtances that I have already mentioned, which have been favourable to Mr. Pitt's reputation, ſome other incidents, in which he had no concern whatever, have accidentally been the means of leading many perſons to have an unreaſonable confidence in his adminiſtration. The revolution in France, and the commotions in Holland and in Flanders, naturally induced many foreigners to place large ſums in the Engliſh funds; and thus theſe events greatly contributed to raiſe the price of ſtocks. Theſe tranſactions were certainly not brought about by Mr. Pitt, nor had he the leaſt merit in them; but they had a great tendency towards raiſing his reputation among the ſtockholders. It is, indeed, one of the great evils attendant on

of ſtate, ARE NOW COMPLETELY REMOVED. The character of Mr. Pitt, as a miniſter of ſtate, is now no more equivocal than that of the Earl of Strafford.

the

the national debt, that it cauſes a conſiderable number of perſons in this country to be inclined to ſupport any miniſter, however cenſurable and unconſtitutional may be his meaſures, if they ſuppoſe them calculated to keep up the price of ſtocks, and to ſecure, though only for a ſhort time, the advantages which they conceive themſelves to derive from the funds.

THE national revenue has lately been repeatedly repreſented to be in a ſtate highly proſperous, and the merit of this has been chiefly attributed to the meaſures of Mr. Pitt. How far the national revenue is in a proſperous ſtate, I ſhall not take upon me to decide; but I muſt obſerve, that, conſidering the great number of new taxes that have been laid, in a time of peace, it can be no wonder, that the public revenue ſhould be, at leaſt apparently, in a ſituation ſomewhat proſperous. But if the revenue

be

be increaſed, the people muſt have ſeverely felt ſuch numerous and oppreſſive taxes; and every augmentation of immediate revenue by ſuch means is far from being a national advantage. There is much reaſon to believe, that ſome of the new regulations reſpecting the revenue have been formed upon very narrow and contracted views, calculated to leſſen various branches of trade, to diſcourage men of property from carrying on ſeveral valuable manufactures, and eventually to decreaſe both the national revenue and commerce. And when we are told of the preſent proſperous ſtate of the revenue, one circumſtance ſhould be at leaſt remembered, which I apprehend to be a moſt undoubted fact, that ſuch heavy and oppreſſive taxes have never been laid, during a time of profound peace, by any miniſter in this country, from the time of William Rufus to the preſent hour, as have been

impoſed

impoſed during the adminiſtration of Mr. Pitt.

It was highly diſhonourable to the laſt houſe of commons, and muſt ever be recorded to its diſhonour, while any impartial hiſtory of it ſhall remain, that ſo great a number of its members voted againſt a repeal of the Teſt and Corporation acts. I bluſh for the honour of my country, when I reflect, that at the cloſe of the eighteenth century, when the national Aſſembly of France has ſolemnly declared, that "all "citizens being equal in the eye of the "law, are equally eligible to all honours, "places, and employments, according to "their different abilities, without any other "diſtinction than that created by their "virtues and talents;" that at ſuch a period, ſuch laws ſhould be thought neceſſary or proper in Great Britain as the Teſt and Corporation acts. It is a juſt ſubject of

ſurprize,

ſurprize, that ſo large a part of that nation which has produced BACON, LOCKE, and NEWTON, ſhould yet be ſo unenlightened. To ſuppoſe that a particular mode of receiving the ſacrament, or adopting any dogmas of artificial theology, can be an indiſpenſable requiſite for qualifying a man to hold any civil office in the community to which he belongs, is one of thoſe Gothic abſurdities, which are ſuited only to the ages of ignorance and barbariſm. There is no other method, therefore, of retrieving the honour of the nation, but by repealing theſe laws, and ſome others of a ſimilar nature, which at preſent diſgrace our ſtatute books, and which are equally hoſtile to the intereſts of truth and reaſon, and to the common rights of mankind.

AMONG other important objects, which would be proper to engage the attention of a new parliament, one is, A REVISION OF

THE

THE PENAL LAWS. That our capital puniſhments are too numerous, and that puniſhments are often not properly proportioned to the nature of offences, and to the degrees of guilt, can be doubted by no man of equity or humanity, by whom the ſubject ſhall be inveſtigated. Indeed, many of our penal ſtatutes, from their ſanguinary nature, are certainly in a very high degree diſhonourable to the country. In 1787, a motion was made by Mr. Minchin, for leave to bring in a bill, to appoint commiſſioners to examine into the ſtate of all the penal laws now in force in the kingdom, and to report their opinion thereon to the houſe of commons. But this very juſt and proper motion was oppoſed by Mr. Pitt. Unfortunately, there is a very miſchievous ſpecies of pride, by which miniſters of ſtate appear ſometimes to be actuated, which leads them to oppoſe any attempts that are made

made to introduce any new kind of reformation, or any new regulations, though manifeſtly beneficial to the public, and even though they ſhould not immediately interfere with the views of government, merely becauſe ſuch meaſures, or plans of reform, did not originate with themſelves. This is one of the evils reſulting from that extreme complaiſance to miniſters of ſtate, and profound deference to their opinions, by which our late parliaments have been too much diſtinguiſhed.

Of the various modes of raiſing money for the ſervice of government, which have been much practiſed for ſome years paſt, one is that of LOTTERIES. The pernicious effects of this mode of raiſing money have been repeatedly pointed out, and are ſo generally acknowledged, that ſcarcely any man entertains the leaſt doubt upon the ſubject. But notwithſtanding this, lotteries continue

to be ſupported by thoſe in adminiſtration; which could not be the caſe, if the welfare of the people were really the object of thoſe to whom the powers of government are entruſted. As I am ſpeaking of the conduct of perſons in adminiſtration, I ſhall here alſo remark, that, at a period when the French nation are aboliſhing all titles, our miniſters for ſome time paſt have been acting as if they ſuppoſed, that one of the moſt important and uſeful offices of government was to make new lords. A ſtrong repreſentation from parliament to the crown, on the great increaſe of the peerage during the preſent reign, would, I apprehend, be a very juſt and ſeaſonable meaſure.

ANOTHER object, which might be proper to engage the attention of parliament, is the preſent ſtate of THE SILVER AND THE COPPER COINAGE, which is a diſ-

grace

grace to the nation. I know, that this is conſidered as the buſineſs of government; but I know, at the ſame time, that it is the buſineſs of parliament to ſee that the executive officers of government diſcharge their duty to the public. It is ſaid, that conſiderable difficulties would attend the adjuſtment of ſuch a new ſilver coinage, as ſhould come into general circulation. Of this I am not inſenſible; but theſe difficulties are no reaſon why nothing ſhould have been done, in a matter of ſuch importance, at leaſt nothing that has been effectual, during the whole of ſo long a reign as the preſent.

The new act, paſſed in 1789, by which additional ſtamp duties were laid on newſpapers and advertiſements, was not favourable to the liberty of the preſs, nor was it ſo intended. Beſides the additional revenue from the increaſe of the ſtamp du-

ties, the avowed object was, to ſecure the payment of thoſe duties; but the real deſign ſeems to have been, to put newſpaper printers, and the proprietors of newſpapers, more in the power of the commiſſioners of the ſtamp-duties, and of the government, than they were before, and to render proſecutions of proprietors of newſpapers, as well as of printers, if it ſhould be thought expedient by government, more practicable. This is done by the clauſe by which it is enacted, that 'from and after 'the firſt day of Auguſt, 1789, no printer 'or publiſher of any newſpaper now print-'ed or publiſhed, or which may hereafter 'be printed or publiſhed, in which any ad-'vertiſements, liable to the ſeveral duties 'by this or any former act or acts impoſed, 'ſhall be inſerted, ſhall receive from the 'ſaid commiſſioners, or any perſon or per-'ſons employed by them, any ſtamped

'paper

'paper for printing any ſuch intelligence
'or occurrence thereon, until the proprietor
'or proprietors intereſted in the ſaid paper,
'or "ſuch and ſo many of the ſaid pro-
"prietors as are, in the judgment of the ſaid
"commiſſioners," or any three or more of
'them, of ſufficient ability to anſwer the
'ſaid duties payable on advertiſements, ſhall
'join in the ſecurity (to government) for
'the punctual payment of the duties.' By this clauſe the commiſſioners of the ſtamp-duties are put in poſſeſſion of the names not only of the printers, but of the ſeveral proprietors of newſpapers, and of legal evidence of their being ſuch. This act alſo contains a clauſe, by which a penalty of five pounds is laid on all thoſe who ſhall even lend a newſpaper for hire. This is a refinement in finance below the genius of George Grenville; and which even that gentleman, though ſtiled by the father of

the preſent miniſter "a pepper-corn finan-
"cier," would probably have regarded with contempt.

As I am ſpeaking of taxes relating to the preſs, I ſhall take this opportunity of remarking, that ſome of the late ſtamp-duties, duties on paper, &c. have been laid on literature with rather too unſparing a hand. The ſtamp-duties and expences of advertiſements are ſo high, that an author has often ſeven or eight pounds to pay even for advertiſing a pamphlet; which is certainly a very heavy tax on literature. As our preſent nobility, and perſons of rank and influence, are not remarkable for their liberal patronage of literature, they ſhould not be quite ſo ready as they are to do it injury, or to concur in thoſe meaſures that burthen and oppreſs it.

When a new parliament ſhall have leiſure to attend, not merely to temporary objects,

objects, but to thoſe meaſures that may be laſtingly beneficial to the nation, it would be highly proper to advert to thoſe real improvements in our conſtitution, which may be dictated by ſound wiſdom and impartial inveſtigation. I would not wiſh to have any alteration made in the general ſyſtem of our laws, or in our conſtitution, but on the moſt mature deliberation: but to ſuppoſe, that the Engliſh conſtitution is ſo perfect, that no improvements can be made in it; and that whilſt advances are continually making in knowledge, our civil and political regulations ought to undergo no alterations, can ariſe only from extreme bigotry, and from very narrow and very contracted views.

Let us be permitted to hope, that many of the public evils, which are now juſtly the ſubject of complaint, will be removed by the virtue and the wiſdom of the preſent par-

liament; that they will adopt, and carry into execution, ſuch plans for a reform in the repreſentation of the people in the houſe of commons, and for ſhortening the duration of parliaments, as ſhall be moſt congenial to the ſpirit of the conſtitution; that they will repeal unjuſt and oppreſſive laws; that they will be careful, in paſſing new laws, not to violate the juſt rights of the people; that they will remember, that the maintenance of the public liberty is an object of infinitely greater magnitude and importance, than any new arrangements in finance, or pretended augmentations of the national revenue; that they will be vigilant in guarding the people from any ſecret or open attacks upon their rights by the miniſters of the crown; and that the aim and reſult of their moſt ſolemn deliberations will be, eſtabliſhing the freedom, and advancing the real intereſts and proſperity of Great Britain.

APPENDIX.

SINCE this tract was written, and the greateſt part of it printed, the Right Hon. EDMUND BURKE has publiſhed, "Reflections on the Revolution in "France, and on the proceedings in cer-"tain Societies in London relative to that "Event, in a Letter intended to have "been ſent to a Gentleman in Paris." In this piece Mr. Burke has very warmly attacked the proceedings of the Society for Conſtitutional Information, and of the Revolution Society of London; and as I am a member of both thoſe Societies, and was one

one of thoſe who the moſt heartily concurred in the particular proceedings which have given ſo much umbrage to Mr. Burke, I ſhall take this opportunity of making ſome remarks on his publication.

Of Mr. Burke I ſhall previouſly obſerve, that I have always entertained a high reſpect for the talents and the character of this very ingenious, eloquent, and learned writer, though I could not always concur with him in ſentiment; and I have conſidered many of his parliamentary exertions as juſtly entitled to great and diſtinguiſhed applauſe. I cannot, therefore, but moſt ſincerely regret, that ſuch admirable abilities ſhould be employed, in productions ſo little friendly to ſome of the moſt important intereſts of mankind, as his late "Reflections on the "Revolution in France."

At the beginning of his book Mr. Burke gives his French correſpondent ſome account

count of the two Societies whoſe conduct he arraigns. But his account of theſe Societies is not remarkably courteous, and not very accurate. Of the Society for Conſtitutional Information, he ſays, among other things, 'That the inſtitution of this So-'ciety appears to be of a charitable, and 'ſo far of a laudable, nature: it was in-'tended for the circulation, at the expence 'of the members, of many books, which 'few others would be at the expence of 'buying; and which might lie on the 'hands of the bookſellers, to the great 'loſs of an uſeful body of men [11].' The deſigns of this Society were not quite ſo charitable, either to authors or bookſellers, as Mr. Burke ſuppoſes. The intention of the Society, and the object of their inſtitution, as expreſſed by themſelves, was "to diffuſe throughout the kingdom, as

[11] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 3.

"univer-

" univerſally as poſſible, a knowledge of the " great principles of Conſtitutional Free- " dom, particularly ſuch as reſpected the " election and duration of the repreſen- " tative body." With this view conſtitutional tracts, and eſſays and extracts from various authors, ſuch as Sydney, Locke, Trenchard, lord Somers, and many others, were printed and diſtributed GRATIS, at the expence of the Society: but no authors, or bookſellers, derived any pecuniary advantage from the publications of the Society. In juſtice to the Society, I ſhall alſo obſerve, that I have never known any body of men whoſe views appeared to be more pure and patriotic, and which conſiſted in general of perſons of more integrity, or of more unblemiſhed characters. Nor was it ſo obſcure a Society as it is repreſented by Mr. Burke. This " poor cha- " ritable club," as he is pleaſed politely to

ſtile

ſtile it, has numbered among its members, lord Surrey, the preſent duke of Norfolk, the duke of Richmond, the earl of Effingham, Sir William Jones, Mr. Sheridan, Sir Cecil Wray, Mr. James Martin, the late excellent Dr. John Jebb, and many other very reſpectable men.

THE vote of congratulation to the National Aſſembly of France, which has been ſo ſeverely attacked by Mr. Burke, originated in the Revolution Society, though it was afterwards adopted by the Society for Conſtitutional Information. The Revolution Society Mr. Burke ſtiles "a club of "Diſſenters";" and it is true, that this Society was originally eſtabliſhed by Diſſenters, who, as a body, have always been zealouſly attached to the Revolution, and to thoſe principles of civil and religious liberty, which they conceive to be natu-

[a] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 4.

rally

rally connected with that important event. But, for ſome years paſt, many members of the eſtabliſhed church have attended their annual and other meetings. At ſome of thoſe meetings I have alſo occaſionally ſeen lord Surrey, the preſent duke of Norfolk, the marquis of Carmarthen, now duke of Leeds, the duke of Richmond, and the duke of Mancheſter: for lords, when they are out of office, will ſometimes do themſelves the honour to appear as members of ſuch Societies. The meetings of the Revolution Society have likewiſe been attended by very reſpectable members of the Houſe of Commons.

But the meeting of the Society, which has principally given offence to Mr. Burke, was that of the fourth of November, 1789. 'I never heard,' ſays he, 'that any public 'meaſure, or political ſyſtem, much leſs 'that the merits of the conſtitution of any 'foreign

'foreign nation, had been the ſubject of 'a formal proceeding at their feſtivals; 'until, to my inexpreſſible ſurprize, I 'found them in a ſort of public capa-'city, by a congratulatory addreſs, giving "an authoritative ſanction" to the pro-'ceedings of the National Aſſembly in 'France[1].'

On the day referred to by Mr. Burke, a motion was made in the Revolution Society by Dr. Price, that the following congratulatory addreſs to the National Aſſembly of France ſhould be agreed to, and tranſmitted to them, ſigned by the chairman:

'The Society for commemorating the 'Revolution in Great Britain, diſdaining 'national partialities, and rejoicing in every 'triumph of liberty and juſtice over arbi-'trary power, offer to the National Aſ-'ſembly of France their congratulations on

[1] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 5.

'the

'the Revolution in that country, and on 'the proſpect it gives to the firſt kingdoms 'in the world, of a common participation 'in the bleſſings of civil and religious li-'berty.

'They cannot help adding their ardent 'wiſhes of an happy ſettlement of ſo im-'portant a Revolution, and at the ſame 'time expreſſing the particular ſatisfaction, 'with which they reflect on the tendency 'of the glorious example given in France 'to encourage other nations to aſſert the 'unalienable rights of mankind, and there-'by to introduce a general reformation in 'the governments of Europe, and to make 'the world free and happy.'

THIS addreſs was accordingly unanimouſly agreed to, and being ſigned by earl Stanhope, who acted as chairman of the Society on that occaſion, was tranſmitted to the duke de Rochefoucault at Paris.

It

It was received in the National Aſſembly with great applauſe, and the archbiſhop of Aix, then preſident of the National Aſſembly, by their direction wrote a letter to lord Stanhope, as chairman of the Revolution Society, 'expreſſing the lively and 'deep ſenſibility with which the National 'Aſſembly of France received the addreſs 'of the Revolution Society in England, 'which breathed thoſe ſentiments of hu-'manity and univerſal benevolence, that 'ought to unite together, in all countries of 'the world, the true friends of liberty and 'of the happineſs of nations.' In a letter written by the duke de Rochefoucault to Dr. Price on that occaſion, that nobleman alſo ſays, that the National Aſſembly had ſeen, in the addreſs of the Revolution Society, 'the dawn of a glorious day, in 'which two nations, who had always 'eſteemed each other, notwithſtanding

" their political diviſions, and the diverſity " of their governments, ſhould contract an " intimate union, founded on the ſimilarity " of their opinions, and their common en- " thuſiaſm for liberty."

In the addreſs of congratulation, voted by the Revolution ſociety, they had certainly no idea, as Mr. Burke has ſtated, of giving any "authoritative ſanction" to the proceedings of the National Aſſembly of France. Nor had they any intention to deceive, as Mr. Burke not very candidly ſuppoſes, by communicating a falſe idea of the nature or importance of their ſociety. Whatever was done reſpecting the Revolution in France in the Revolution ſociety of London, was done in the moſt open and public manner; and any information concerning the ſociety might have been eaſily obtained, either by Engliſhmen or by Frenchmen, who had thought proper to

make

make any inquiries concerning it. As to any ſuppoſed irregularity in the addreſs of ſuch a ſociety to ſuch a body as the National Aſſembly of France, they were aware, that it might be liable to ſome objection of that kind; and, therefore, in the letter which was ſent to the duke de Rochefoucault, requeſting him to preſent the addreſs to the National Aſſembly, it was obſerved, that 'the Society conſidered the National 'Aſſembly as acting for the world, as well 'as for the great kingdom it repreſented, 'and therefore hoped that their addreſs was 'not an improper intruſion; or, if it was, 'that it would be excuſed, as an effuſion of 'zeal in the cauſe of general liberty and 'human happineſs, which no conſidera-'tions of impropriety had been able to 'ſuppreſs.'

It was the deſign of the Revolution ſociety to teſtify to the French nation, that

notwithſtanding the antient hoſtility which had ſubſiſted between England and France, there were many of the Engliſh who ſincerely rejoiced that the French had regained their liberties, and wiſhed to ſee them fully eſtabliſhed. It was with the ſame view that more than ſix hundred perſons aſſembled in the city of London, on the 6th of July, 1790, in order to celebrate the Revolution in France, on the ſame day in which it was ſo magnificently celebrated at Paris. I took ſome pains to promote this meeting in London, and attended it with an high degree of pleaſure, as I have always wiſhed for the eſtabliſhment of liberty in France [14], and been deſirous of promoting every

[14] Before the congratulatory addreſs of the Revolution Society, and before the French Revolution had taken place, I had expreſſed, and very ſincerely, my wiſhes for the eſtabliſhment of liberty in France. On the 4th

every public teſtimony of the ſame ſentiments among my countrymen. But Mr. Burke ſeems to be of opinion, that public declaration

4th of November, 1788, it being a century from the period of the Revolution, I delivered a ſhort oration to the Revolution ſociety, by their deſire, and which at their requeſt was printed. In a note to this is the following paſſage, which was publiſhed many months before the deſtruction of the Baſtile, and the other events which have contributed to the eſtabliſhment of the French revolution. 'I ſincerely wiſh ſucceſs to all the 'efforts of the French nation for the recovery of their 'liberties; and I ſhould rejoice to ſee them poſſeſſed 'of a conſtitution ſimilar to that of England. It 'muſt, indeed, be the wiſh of every friend to the rights 'of mankind, that the bleſſings of freedom may be ex-'tended to the whole human race. Having mentioned 'the French nation, I ſhall alſo remark, that it is ar-'dently to be deſired, that England and France may 'no longer continue their antient hoſtility againſt each 'other; but that France may regain poſſeſſion of 'her liberties; and that two nations, ſo eminently 'diſtinguiſhed in arms, and in literature, inſtead of 'exhauſting themſelves in ſanguinary wars, for no

declarations, reſpecting the tranſactions of foreign countries, ſhould be made only by perſons inveſted with authority. It is, however, not among lords of the treaſury, or ſecretaries of ſtate, or the favourites of a court, that men diſtinguiſhed by their zeal

' valuable purpoſe, may unite together in communi-
' cating the advantages of freedom, ſcience, and the
' arts, to the moſt remote regions of the earth.'

[The above note was inſerted in the firſt edition of this tract, which was printed in 1790. At that time, at leaſt when the firſt note appeared in 1788, no idea appeared to be entertained, that the French nation intended to eſtabliſh a republic. I therefore expreſſed my wiſhes, that they might obtain a conſtitution ſimilar to that of England. But as I hold it to be an axiom in politics, that no nation has a right to interfere with the internal government of another country, in oppoſition to the known ſenſe of the majority of the inhabitants of that country, from the moment that the French nation, publickly and authentically, expreſſed their deſire of a republican form of government, no man in France more ſincerely wiſhed the eſtabliſhment of the French republic than myſelf.]

for

for the promotion of human liberty, and human happineſs, are often to be found. They who are inveſted with the powers of government in any country, may be actuated by very different motives from thoſe of an enlarged philanthropy; but that is no reaſon why the inhabitants of a free country, or any part of them, ſhould not teſtify, if they judge it expedient, in the moſt public and ſolemn manner, their joy at ſuch events as happen in other countries, which may tend to the advantage of ſuch countries, to advance the liberty of the inhabitants, and to increaſe the felicity of mankind. Such intercourſes between different nations are calculated to promote that enlarged and comprehenſive benevolence, the diffuſion of which would communicate peace and happineſs to the world.

THE meeting in London, on the 14th of July, 1790, to celebrate the French revolution,

volution, gave riſe to the Anglo-Gallic feſtival at Nantes, on the 23d of Auguſt following, to which all the Engliſh in that city, and in the neighbouring towns, were invited. This feſtival was given by the "Société des Amis de la Conſtitution à "Nantes," a ſociety conſiſting of ſeveral hundred members, and from that ſociety M. Français, their preſident, and M. Bougon [15], were ſent as deputies to the Revolution

[15] Theſe gentlemen, during their reſidence in London, were much and deſervedly reſpected for the politeneſs of their manners, the good ſenſe and knowledge which they diſplayed, their love of liberty, and the ſtrong deſire which they manifeſted to promote perpetual peace and union between France and Great Britain. Some other perſons, as well as Mr. Burke, might poſſibly entertain ſuſpicions reſpecting the nature of theſe gentlemen's commiſſion: but they had evidently no other aim than that of teſtifying their regard, and that of thoſe who ſent them, for the people of England, and advancing the intereſts of liberty and peace

lution ſociety of London. Mr. Burke ſeems much offended at the proceedings of this ſociety [16], as well as that of the ſocieties in London, who teſtified their joy at the Revolution in France. But to me it appears, that the Anglo-Gallic feſtival at Nantes [17], in which Frenchmen and Engliſhmen united together as brethren, and teſtified the moſt ardent deſire for the liberty and happineſs of both nations, and that perpetual peace and harmony might be eſtabliſhed between them, was, in the eye of reaſon and humanity, a much more pleaſing ſcene, than any that were exhibited in thoſe ages of chivalry, of which Mr.

peace in both nations. As to the intimation that ſeems to be thrown out by Mr. Burke, that theſe gentlemen came here as a kind of miſſionaries for the propagation of infidelity, and of "atheiſtical fanaticiſm," this is an idea that is certainly deſtitute of the leaſt foundation.

[16] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 227.

[17] Vid. the account of this "Fête Anglo-Françaiſe," printed at Nantes in 8vo. in 1790.

Burke

Burke ſeems to be ſo much enamoured. Of theſe meetings, both in France and in England, I have the fulleſt conviction, that they originated in the beſt and the worthieſt motives, in an extended philanthropy, and in an ardent zeal for thoſe great rights of mankind, compared with which the private intereſts of kings, as individuals, are entitled to little notice or regard.

But Mr. Burke, adverting to the addreſs of the Revolution Society, ſays, 'I muſt 'be tolerably ſure, before I venture pub-'lickly to congratulate men upon a bleſſing, 'that they have really received one [18];' and alſo, that 'the circumſtances are what 'render every civil and political ſcheme 'beneficial or noxious to mankind [19].' On theſe principles the conduct of the Revo-

[18] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 9.

[19] Ibid. p. 8.

lution

lution Society may be vindicated. Before their addreſs of congratulation was preſented, they had received ſufficient evidence, that the French nation had emancipated themſelves from a form of government, which was certainly in a very high degree deſpotic. They had choſen a body of national repreſentatives, whoſe intereſt it was to promote the welfare of their country, and who appeared to be actuated by the worthieſt motives. Indeed, more noble, and more patriotic ſentiments, were never exhibited in any country, than were diſplayed during the courſe of the late revolution in France. Great and important advances had alſo been made in the formation of a free conſtitution of government for that kingdom; and the rights of men had been declared and aſcertained, with a clearneſs and preciſion that has ſcarcely ever been equalled in any of the revolutions

tions of nations. Theſe were ſufficient grounds for the conduct of the Revolution Society of London, in voting and tranſmitting their addreſs of congratulation; nor could it be neceſſary, previouſly to ſuch a meaſure, that they ſhould wait for the final ſettlement and completion of the French conſtitution.

Mr. Burke ſays of the French nation, that 'they have been tempted to throw off 'their allegiance to their ſovereign, as well 'as the antient conſtitution of their coun-'try[20].' Theſe are well ſounding words; but if the French, by throwing off their allegiance to their ſovereign, which was not without reaſon, and the antient conſtitution of their country, have obtained real liberty, and a better conſtitution, they have acted very wiſely and rationally. And as to the ſuppoſed degradation of the

[20] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 77, 78.

king,

king, it was nothing but a degradation from a power, which neither he, nor any of his anceſtors, ought ever to have poſſeſſed.

Mr. Burke declaims very copiouſly, and very eloquently, on ſome irregularities, and acts of violence, that have taken place in France ſince the Revolution. It was not to be expected that a people, juſt emerging from a deſpotic government to an high degree of liberty, ſhould in every reſpect act with perfect diſcretion, wiſdom, and moderation. But after all the pathetic repreſentations made by Mr. Burke of the tranſactions of the 6th of October, 1789, and after taking into the account the preceding and ſubſequent tranſactions, we may venture to affirm, that no revolution of ſuch importance, and ſuch magnitude, was ever effected with ſo little bloodſhed [21].

Many

[21] This was the caſe when this tract was firſt publiſhed. But very ſanguinary ſcenes have ſince taken place

Many circumſtances before, and after the revolution, naturally exaſperated the people, and excited them to acts of violence.

place in France; ſcenes ever to be deplored by the friends of freedom and of human happineſs. The calamities of France may certainly be imputed, in a very conſiderable degree, to the unjuſt interference of foreign powers. But it is much to be lamented, that ſo many of the French nation, when contending for public liberty, ſhould have ſhewn themſelves to be ſo little acquainted with its nature and its principles. During the ſucceſſion of the different factions in France, ſince the firſt revolution, it has alſo been a great evil, that the freedom of the preſs has not been more inviolably maintained. If this had been preſerved, without interruption, the party of Robeſpierre could not have acquired the aſcendency they did, nor would they have been able to have brought ſome of the beſt Republicans in France to the ſcaffold. In every country, whether contending for its liberties, or in actual poſſeſſion of them, it may be laid down as an univerſal and invariable rule, that the enemies of the freedom of the preſs are the enemies of general liberty and of general felicity.

The

The firing on the people in the gardens of the Thuilleries on the 12th of July, 1789, juſtly increaſed the ſuſpicions of the inhabitants of Paris reſpecting the deſigns of the court; and when the National Aſſembly was conceived to be in danger, when foreign troops were brought to act againſt the citizens, when artillery was pointed againſt the capital, when the miniſtry was changed, and mareſchal Broglio was made miniſter of war, the people had abundant reaſon to believe, that all which had been done in favour of their liberties was about to be over-turned. They diſtruſted the king, and they conſidered the queen as undoubtedly hoſtile to the national freedom. Theſe circumſtances naturally excited the indignation of the people; their violence was increaſed by the ſcarcity of corn which then prevailed; and to theſe, and ſimilar cauſes, the diſorders which aroſe,

may

may juſtly be attributed. It ſhould alſo be remembered, that, in a time of civil commotion and tumult, falſe rumours may operate powerfully on the minds of the multitude, and lead them to acts of which they would not be guilty, were they accurately acquainted with the real ſtate of things.

Mr. Burke ſeems to be much affected with the preſent ſtate of the king of France, under the idea of his being an impriſoned king. But, if this ſtatement of Mr. Burke were preciſely the caſe, an impriſoned monarch is an inconſiderable evil compared with that of an enſlaved nation. Among other ſtatements which Mr. Burke makes, relative to the behaviour of the French to their king, he ſays, that they have rebelled 'againſt a mild and lawful 'monarch, with more fury, outrage, and 'inſult, than ever any people has been 'known

'known to riſe againſt the moſt illegal 'uſurper, or the moſt ſanguinary tyrant [a].' But without referring to the hiſtories of other nations, ſurely our own hiſtory will afford inſtances of kings, who have experienced much rougher treatment, than any which has yet been offered to Lewis the Sixteenth. Our Charles the Firſt, as Mr. Burke well knows, was publicly executed before the front of his own palace, and his ſon James the Second was dethroned, and for ever baniſhed from the kingdom. In more antient times, Richard the Second was dethroned by parliament, and died in confinement, though the manner of his death is differently related. Henry the Sixth alſo died in the Tower, and by a violent death, according to the generality of our hiſtorians.

[a] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 56.

Though Mr. Burke expreſſes great concern for the preſent condition of the king of France, he endeavours ſtill more to engage the paſſions of his readers againſt the revolution, by his pathetic repreſentations of the ſuppoſed ſufferings of the queen of France. I do not know that any authentic information has been tranſmitted to this country of any very ſevere ſufferings of the queen: but what are the private and perſonal intereſts and feelings of a queen of France, or of an hundred queens of France, though decorated with all the beauty and accompliſhments with which Mr. Burke has complimented the preſent queen, compared with the freedom and the happineſs of more than twenty-five millions of people? No knights-errant, we may preſume, will be found in this country, nor probably in any other, to ſally forth in defence of king Lewis, or

his

his virtuous and diſtreſſed conſort, notwithſtanding thoſe enchanting graces in the fair queen, which Mr. Burke has diſplayed with ſo much eloquence and gallantry.

Our ingenious author himſelf, indeed, remarks, that "the age of chivalry is "gone[23];" and, therefore, we may eaſily believe, that the dull, and unſentimental people of the preſent age, will not think it neceſſary for the peace of the world, that ten thouſand ſwords ſhould leap from their ſcabbards[24], whenever a diſreſpectful, or even a menacing look, is caſt at a queen of France, or at a queen of any other country. We may alſo venture to be of opinion, that it will be much better that a nation, like the French, conſiſting of gallant men, of men of honour,

[23] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 113.

[24] Ibid. p. 112.

and of cavaliers [25], ſhould draw their ſwords, whenever it be neceſſary, in defence of the liberties of their country, rather than in defence of any pretended privileges of queens, or of any aſſumed and arbitrary prerogatives of kings.

It is in no reſpect wonderful, that kings ſhould ſometimes be "hurled from their "thrones," and that this ſhould occaſionally be done with circumſtances that may aggravate their ſenſe of the calamity attendant on their fall. But it is truly wonderful, that ſuch great numbers of the human race ſhould ſubmit, with ſo much ſervility, to men inveſted with the regal dignity, who are totally unworthy of the office they bear, and to whom at the ſame time powers are given, that it would be unſafe to intruſt even to the beſt and wiſeſt of the human ſpecies. Indeed, the degra-

[25] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 112.

dation

dation of human nature, in the ſubmiſſion that is paid to the authority of tyrants under the denomination of kings, is a much juſter ſubject of lamentation, than the degradation of ſome inconſiderable individuals, probably little diſtinguiſhed by any eſtimable quality, either moral or intellectual, but who may happen to be decorated with the trappings of royalty.

Mr. Burke certainly carries his reverence for chivalry too far, when he affirms, that, on account of its decline, or of that of the ſentiments it inſpired, "the glory "of Europe is extinguiſhed for ever [26]." Europe, I think, may ſtill ſubſiſt, very honourably ſubſiſt, and with all its glory, though all that "proud ſubmiſſion," and that "dignified obedience [27]," of which

[26] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 113.

[27] Id. ibid.

Mr. Burke ſpeaks, ſhould be for ever baniſhed from the face of the earth.

Among other things which Mr. Burke ſays he ſhould look for in "the new liberty of France," before he offered any congratulations upon it, one is, that it was combined "with the diſcipline and "obedience of armies[18]." But I muſt confeſs, that I differ ſo much from Mr. Burke on this ſubject, that I think matters in this world will never be as they ought, while there is a ſingle ſtanding army ſubſiſting, on the principles on which all the ſtanding armies in Europe are now conſtituted. It may be proper, that the inhabitants of the different countries of the world ſhould be armed, as free citizens, for their own defence, and that they ſhould be occaſionally exerciſed; but the ſtanding armies of Europe, or of any other quarter of the globe,

[18] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 9.

I con-

I conſider, in general, as only calculated to ſupport the tyranny of princes, and to diſturb the peace of the world.

"WE have ſeen," ſays Mr. Burke, "the king of France ſold by his ſoldiers "for an increaſe of pay[29]." But, in juſtice to the French ſoldiers, that ought to be ſuppoſed, which I have no doubt to have been the fact, that the light and knowledge, reſpecting the principles of government, which had been much diffuſed among other claſſes of men in France, had alſo extended itſelf to the military, and that many of them were deſirous of freeing their country from the deſpotiſm under which it had long laboured. The French troops, by deſerting their king, to promote the freedom of their country, acted the part of good citizens, and of good Frenchmen. They probably remembered, that they were,

[29] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 138.

or that they ought to be, not merely the troops of the king, but of the nation; that they derived their ſubſiſtence from taxes paid by the people; and that if they employed their arms in ſupport of public liberty, they diſcharged the moſt important of all duties, that to their Creator only excepted, their duty to their country.

If it be imagined, that ſome of the French troops were influenced by the idea of an increaſe of pay, we may ſtill conſider the offer made to them as a very juſtifiable act of policy; and if it ſhould be ſuppoſed, that the deſertion of the French troops from their king, may make other princes diſtruſtful of their armies, it will be no great evil to mankind. Standing armies, in general, may juſtly be regarded as the agents and inſtruments of deſpotiſm; and if it ſhould be found, that ſuch ſtanding armies are not always to be truſted, princes will

will learn to depend leſs upon their troops, and more upon their people.

Mr. Burke is apprehenſive, that the doctrines now propagated among the French ſoldiers, concerning "the rights of men," will not tend to make MERE INSTRUMENTS of them, which he, with M. de la Tour du Pin, thinks military men, as ſuch, ought always to be. He alſo expreſſes his aſtoniſhment, that they ſhould be directed, by authority, occaſionally to mix in the convivial meetings and aſſociations of their fellow citizens[30]; and he animadverts upon the meaſures that are adopted to excite them to read, as well as to engage in military exerciſes, they being, he ſays, "full as well ſupplied with the ammuni-"tion of pamphlets as of cartridges[31]." I agree in opinion with Mr. Burke, that this

[30] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 310.

[31] Ibid. p. 309.

method

method of treating the French ſoldiers, may poſſibly not ſo well qualify them to be MERE INSTRUMENTS, or machines, as the manner in which ſoldiers are ordinarily trained in other countries. But if they ſhould not be ſuch complete INSTRUMENTS, nor quite ſo good ſoldiers, they will probably be better men, and better citizens. They may be fully equal to all the purpoſes of defending their country againſt internal oppreſſion, or foreign invaſion; though they may not engage with ſo much alacrity, as French troops have formerly done, in enterprizes to over-turn the liberties, or to interrupt the tranquillity of foreign nations.

IN enumerating ſome of the evils that he ſuppoſes will ariſe from the French revolution, and from the propagation of the principles by which it is ſupported, Mr. Burke ſays, "Kings will be tyrants

"from

" from policy, when ſubjects are rebels " from principle [12]." To this, which has ſomewhat of the appearance of a threat on the part of tyranny, I anſwer, that if oppoſition to tyranny be termed rebellion, whenever juſt principles of government ſhall prevail among mankind, tyrants will ceaſe to have any exiſtence in this world, either as princes, or as men. Their policy and their power will be equally annihilated.

Mr. Burke endeavours to prove, that the late government in France has been repreſented in a worſe light than it deſerved. Men have ſpoken of it, he ſays, as if it reſembled the deſpotic governments of Perſia or of Turkey. But, he adds, ' Facts do not ſupport this reſemblance. ' Along with much evil, there is ſome ' good in monarchy itſelf; and ſome cor- ' rective to its evil, from religion, from

[12] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 116.

' laws,

'laws, from manners, from opinions, the 'French monarchy muſt have received; 'which rendered it (though by no means 'a free, and therefore by no means, a good 'conſtitution) a deſpotiſm rather in ap-'pearance than in reality [33].' But we may certainly be of opinion, that the government of France was ſo deſpotic, as to have rendered a revolution extremely deſirable, without ſuppoſing it to be "a poſitively "deſtructive government [34]," or "the worſt "of all political inſtitutions [35]." We may readily admit, that there are governments in the world much more deſpotic than the late government of France; we may alſo admit, that the deſpotiſm of the French government had received ſome mitigation "from religion, from laws, from man-"ners, from opinions;" and yet, when we

[33] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 189.
[34] Ibid. p. 194. [35] Ibid. p. 192.

have

have admitted all this, we may very conſiſtently maintain, that it was a government ſo radically bad, and in which there was ſo much deſpotiſm, that ſuch a government ought never to have exiſted among mankind. In France, before the revolution, the common people were oppreſſed by the crown, by the nobility, and by the power of the eccleſiaſtics; the commonalty and peaſantry groaned under the weight of unequal and unjuſt taxes, and of burthenſome and unreaſonable feudal ſervices; the laws did not inflict puniſhment on the guilty, nor afford protection to innocence; liberty of conſcience was not allowed, nor the freedom of ſpeech, or of the preſs; LETTRES DE CACHET for the arbitrary impriſonment of the moſt reſpectable citizens were often obtained with facility by the miſtreſs of a king, or of a miniſter; the worthieſt men might be thrown into dungeons,

geons, and imprisoned at pleasure, without even knowing the offences with which they were charged; and no man could be secured, by the laws of his country, from perpetual imprisonment, or the grossest injuries and indignities, if directed or authorized by the minions of the court. Indeed, Mr. Burke himself acknowledges, that the sovereign of France had an "unlimited "power over the persons of his subjects[36]." No opposition could be too great against such a power, by whomsoever it might be possessed; and we need not hesitate to pronounce, that there can be no country upon earth in which such a government ought to be endured, as that which subsisted in France before the revolution.

But Mr. Burke considers the state of population in France as an argument in favour of its government. He gives a

[36] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 195.

favour-

favourable account of the population of that country, and remarks, that "no "country in which population flourishes, "and is in progreſſive improvement, can "be under a very miſchievous govern-"ment [27]." But the population of a country is certainly no criterion of the excellency of its government; at leaſt it affords no proof that freedom is enjoyed by its inhabitants, or that the government is not deſpotic. The hiſtory of mankind will afford abundant inſtances, that the human ſpecies may ſubſiſt, and even increaſe in numbers, under very great degrees of oppreſſion. Wherever, from the fertility of the ſoil, or any other cauſes, the means of ſubſiſtence are eaſily afforded to the common people, population will naturally increaſe, though the government may be oppreſſive and deſpotic. No man, who

[27] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 189.

has

has any juſt ideas of civil liberty, or any attachment to it, will commend the Pruſſian government; and yet the population of that country has, within the laſt thirty years, been more increaſed, than that of other nations who have enjoyed a much greater degree of liberty.

Mr. Burke ſpeaks in very high terms of the condition of France before the revolution, of the ſtate of agriculture, of commerce, of manufactures; of her progreſs in the arts, of her ſplendid edifices, of the illuſtrious men that the country has produced, and the diſtinguiſhed figure that France has made in the hiſtory of modern Europe. But this only ſerves to prove, that great things may be done by ſuch a nation as the French, though labouring under many oppreſſions from the form of their government. It may, however, be admitted, that the French monarchs ſometimes exerciſed

ercised their power with a considerable degree of clemency and moderation, and that they have had some very wise and able ministers, whose administration has contributed to the prosperity of France. But notwithstanding this, there was certainly, prior to the revolution, a great degree of poverty among the middling and inferior classes of the people in that kingdom, which chiefly derived its source from the faults of its government. As for the persons of distinguished talents and character who have appeared in France, I have long observed, with admiration, as well as Mr. Burke, the many great men who have adorned that country; and have remarked the many excellent qualities which were manifested by its inhabitants; and for that reason have I the more regretted, that such a nation should be subjected to a government so totally unworthy of it, as that

which ſubſiſted in France before the revolution.

After having given a very favourable account of the ſtate of France previous to the late revolution, Mr. Burke ſays, 'Whether the ſyſtem, if it deſerves ſuch 'a name, now built on the ruins of that 'antient monarchy, will be able to give a 'better account of the population and 'wealth of the country, which it has 'taken under its care, is a matter very 'doubtful. Inſtead of improving by the 'change, I apprehend, that a long ſeries 'of years muſt be told before it can re-'cover in any degree the effects of this 'philoſophic revolution, and before the 'nation can be replaced on its former foot-'ing [19].' A conſiderable ſcarcity of ſpecie may naturally have been occaſioned by many of the nobility, and other perſons

[19] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 196.

of

of opulence, having quitted Paris; and their emigration muſt alſo, for the preſent, have been injurious to trade and commerce. But theſe are temporary evils, which it was not in the power of the National Aſſembly to prevent, and for which they can deſerve no cenſure. It may alſo be true, that the population of France, upon the whole, may for the preſent be decreaſed. But the nation will not eventually be the worſe for being deſerted by the friends of deſpotiſm; and there can be no doubt, but that when a free conſtitution of government has been for ſome time firmly eſtabliſhed, the wealth, the population, and the general proſperity of the kingdom, will receive a very high degree of augmentation. Unfavourable circumſtances might, however, at firſt naturally be expected; for it could not reaſonably be ſuppoſed, that bleſſings of ſo ineſtima-

ble a value, as thoſe of civil and religious liberty, could be obtained in ſuch a country as France, without ſome inconveniences, ſome dangers, and ſome ſacrifices.

Of all the proceedings of the National Aſſembly of France, nothing ſeems to have excited ſo much indignation in Mr. Burke, as the confiſcation of the eſtates of the church; and he is extremely deſirous of perſuading his correſpondent, that the inhabitants of this country in general feel the ſame indignation that he does upon the ſubject. He affirms of the people of England, that "they ſee with horror and alarm "that enormous and ſhameleſs act of proſcription[19];" and he alſo ſays, "I aſſure "you, that there is not one public man in "this kingdom, whom you would wiſh to "quote; no not one of any party or de"ſcription, who does not reprobate the

[19] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 156.

"diſhoneſt,

'honeſt, perfidious, and cruel confiſca-
'tion, which the National Aſſembly has
'been compelled to make of that pro-
'perty, which it was their firſt duty to
'protect *.'

I SHOULD be extremely unwilling to believe, that Mr. Burke has advanced what he does not himſelf ſuppoſe to be true; but, I confeſs, I can no more believe, that the generality of the people of this country, or the more reſpectable public men, view the ſale of the church lands in France in the ſame light that Mr. Burke does, than I could believe an aſſertion, that the generality of the reſpectable public men in this country were Mahometans. I am fully convinced, that the greateſt part of the people of this country, whether public or private men, have viewed this tranſaction without any horror, and with very little alarm, and

* Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 156.

that by many it has been entirely approved.

MUCH of Mr. Burke's reaſoning, concerning the proceedings of the National Aſſembly reſpecting the lands of the church, is inconcluſive, becauſe it is grounded upon a principle that very few perſons will admit beſides himſelf; namely, that the poſſeſſions of the church were to be conſidered in the ſame light, and as equally ſacred, with private property. But in any country, if large eſtates, or incomes, are appropriated to the ſupport of a particular claſs of men in the community, for the diſcharge of public offices, or for ſervices to be rendered to the community, the interpoſition of the government, or legiſlature, in the appropriation or diſpoſal of ſuch eſtates, or incomes, or even the ſeizure and confiſcation of them, has always been conſidered as a very different thing from the ſeizure or confiſcation of private property.

property [41]. For if larger incomes are appropriated to any particular claſs of men, for ſervices, or ſuppoſed ſervices, to the community, than is conſiſtent with the general intereſt; or if eſtabliſhments exiſt, ſupported by large revenues, that are more detrimental than beneficial to a community; in caſes like theſe, the legiſlature have an undoubted right to interpoſe, and to adopt ſuch meaſures as ſhall be moſt conducive to the welfare of the ſtate.

[41] In one paſſage, Mr. Burke himſelf ſeems to be of opinion, that the revenues of ſuch inſtitutions as thoſe of monaſteries, were to be regarded in a different light from private property. For he ſays, 'In a queſtion 'of reformation, I always conſider corporate bodies, 'whether ſole or conſiſting of many, to be much 'more ſuſceptible of a PUBLIC DIRECTION by the 'POWER OF THE STATE, in THE USE OF THEIR 'PROPERTY, and in the regulation of modes and 'habits of life in their members, than private citizens 'ever can, or perhaps ought to be.' Reflections, &c. p. 239.

Of the utility of eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments in general, or of the utility of particular eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments, different men will form different opinions. But thoſe who believe, that eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments, with large revenues, contribute much more to the perpetuation of error, and of ſuperſtition, than to the advancement of truth, and of real Chriſtianity, muſt differ very eſſentially from Mr. Burke upon this ſubject. However, as to the eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment of France, when we conſider the great degree of ſuperſtition that was connected with that eſtabliſhment, we may very properly regard what has been done reſpecting the church lands in that kingdom, not as ariſing from "wanton rapacity," but, in the language that Mr. Burke has given to the advocates for it, as "a great meaſure of national "policy, adopted to remove an extenſive,

"inve-

" inveterate, ſuperſtitious miſchief [42]." That many of the Gallican clergy were men of conſiderable learning, and of great perſonal merit, as Mr. Burke has ſtated, I have no doubt; I always had that idea of them; but it does not therefore follow, that the eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment of which they compoſed a part, with all the ſuperſtition attendant on it, and all its appendages, could be ſupported with benefit to the French nation.

As Mr. Burke feels great indignation at the ſale of the church lands, ſo he is alſo extremely diſſatisfied at the abolition of the monaſteries [43]. He thinks, that the monks were as well employed as many others, and feels a conſiderable reluctance " to diſturb the tranquil repoſe of mo-

[42] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 230.

[43] Ibid. p. 232, 236, 237, 238.

" naſtic

"naſtic quietude[44]." Many members, however, of the National Aſſembly, might juſtly conſider "theſe vaſt eſtates," as Mr. Burke himſelf ſtiles them, "of the eccle-"ſiaſtic corporations[45]," of the monaſteries and nunneries, and other inſtitutions of that kind, as appropriated to the purpoſes of ſuperſtition, and as extremely injurious to the community. Independently, therefore, of the benefit which the ſtate might derive from the appropriation of theſe revenues, they might be led by the pureſt principles of patriotiſm, without being either Atheiſts or Infidels, to concur in the abolition of theſe inſtitutions. But Mr. Burke is of opinion, that if it had been neceſſary or proper to deſtroy theſe monaſteries, their revenues might have been employed in ſome new inſtitutions of

[44] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 237.

[45] Ibid. p. 163.

a truly

a truly benevolent and public-ſpirited nature[46]. They certainly might have been ſo employed, and probably would, if the immediate neceſſities of the ſtate had not rendered ſuch ſchemes, at this time, inexpedient or impracticable.

Mr. Burke ſometimes expreſſes himſelf very ſtrongly concerning the irreligion and infidelity which have appeared in France; but there can be no reaſonable doubt, that it was from that fabric of Romiſh ſuperſtition, which was ſupported in France by the revenues of the church in that kingdom, that much of the infidelity, which has there been manifeſted, derived its origin. Superſtition and abſurdity, ſupported by eſtabliſhed creeds, and ceremonial obſervances, which will not ſtand the teſt of any rational inveſtigation, are

[46] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 232, 233, 234.

natural

natural ſources of ſcepticiſm and infidelity. When Chriſtianity is deformed by ſuperſtition, or by enthuſiaſm, thoſe perſons reject it with diſdain, without examination or inquiry, who would have received and embraced it chearfully and cordially, if it had been exhibited to them unadulterated and uncorrupted, with its native excellence, in the original beauty and ſimplicity with which it was delivered by its divine author.

Mr. Burke has ſaid much concerning the importance of religion in promoting the welfare of ſociety; and there can be no doubt, but that real religion, the ſincere worſhip of the Deity, and the practice of virtue, tends in a very high degree to advance the beſt intereſts of men even in the preſent world. But I ſee nothing in the new conſtitution of France, that is not perfectly conſiſtent with the exiſtence of religion

religion in that country, or which ſhould even prevent the principles of Chriſtianity, and the precepts which it enjoins, from being more exactly and univerſally adhered to, than they have ever yet appeared to be in that kingdom. By the new conſtitution of France, every man is to be permitted to worſhip God according to the dictates of his own conſcience; and there will be no impediment to the moſt extenſive and ſucceſsful propagation of religious truth. As to the deſign, which Mr. Burke imputes to ſome of the French philoſophers, of endeavouring to bring about the total abolition of Chriſtianity [47], that is an evil of which no man, who really believes its divine origin, can poſſibly entertain any ſerious apprehenſions.

RELIGION, ſo far as it can be promoted by any eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments, is cer-

[47] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 218.

tainly

tainly chiefly promoted by the labours of the inferior clergy; and the inferior and parochial clergy of France are intended, by the new arrangements, to be placed in a better ſituation than they were before. But Mr. Burke ſays, that before the French revolution, there were about an hundred and twenty biſhops in that kingdom [48]. Many perſons, however, will probably be of opinion, that ſuch a number of biſhops, with large incomes, was not neceſſary for the advancement of religion in any country. Mr. Burke himſelf remarks, that 'the poſſeſſions of the church, through 'the patronage of the crown, generally 'devolved upon the nobility. The bi-'ſhoprics, and the great commendatory 'abbies, were, with few exceptions, held 'by that order [49].' Is it then probable,

[48] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 216.

[49] Ibid. p. 164.

or

or will any man ſuppoſe, that thoſe great eccleſiaſtical poſſeſſions were, in any conſiderable degree, really employed in the promotion of piety and virtue? Mr. Burke, during his ſtay in France, was enlightened on the ſubject of huſbandry by his converſations with the Carthuſian monks; and from ſuch converſations he might poſſibly derive his favourable opinion of monaſteries, and his regret at their diſſolution; but whether from his converſations with the noble and right reverend prelates, whom he alſo met with in France, he derived any very copious information of the nature and ſucceſs of their labours in the promotion of religion, we are unable to determine.

Mr. Burke ſeems to ſuppoſe, that the French, in conſequence of the late revolution, will loſe not only their religion, but their trade, their manufactures, and even

their

their learning [50].' After theſe ſtrange ſuppoſitions, which are juſt as probable as the tales in the Arabian Nights Entertainments, Mr. Burke aſks, ſpeaking of the French nation in this imaginary degraded ſtate, 'What ſort of a thing muſt be a nation, 'of groſs, ſtupid, ferocious, and at the 'ſame time poor and ſordid barbarians, 'deſtitute of religion, honour, or manly 'pride, poſſeſſing nothing at preſent, and 'hoping for nothing hereafter [51]?' He is apprehenſive, that the French nation are 'going faſt, and by the ſhorteſt cut, to 'that horrible and diſguſtful ſituation.' 'Already,' he adds, 'there appears a po-'verty of conception, a coarſeneſs and 'vulgarity in all the proceedings of the 'Aſſembly, and of all their inſtructors. 'Their liberty is not liberal. Their ſci-

[50] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 118.

[51] Id. ibid.

'ence

'ence is preſumptuous ignorance. Their 'humanity is ſavage and brutal[52].' This is the character given by Mr. Burke of the National Aſſembly of France, a legiſlative body, who have manifeſted a greater degree of intellectual illumination, a more ardent zeal for the general intereſts of the community, and for the principles of juſt and equal liberty, and who have exhibited more noble and ſublime views, than any other body of men inveſted with power in that country, from the foundation of the French monarchy to the preſent hour.

In ſtating his objections to the new conſtitution of France, Mr. Burke intimates his apprehenſions, that foreign ſtates will not ſeriouſly enter into negociations, relative to peace or war, with the French king, or with his miniſters, while their

[52] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 118.

power is ſo limited as it is at preſent [53]. There can, however, be no doubt, but that foreign powers will readily enter into negociations with the French nation, or with any miniſters, or executive officers, that they ſhall appoint, when their conſtitution is fully eſtabliſhed. Mr. Burke remarks, that the French miniſters have already experienced the inconveniencies of their ſituation, in the courſe of their proceedings relative to the differences between Spain and Great Britain [54]: but this was probably merely occaſioned by the circumſtance of the French conſtitution being not yet finally adjuſted. In no country, immediately after a revolution, and before the public affairs are fully ſettled, can it be expected, that the executive buſineſs of government will be adminiſtered with the

[53] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 294.

[54] Ibid., p. 296.

ſame

ſame eaſe, and the ſame regularity, as during a period of greater tranquility. As to Mr. Burke's apprehenſions of the intrigues of foreign powers in the National Aſſembly, this is an evil that might in a great degree be avoided by proper laws and regulations; and does not appear to be of ſo dangerous a tendency, as entruſting the power of making war or peace to particular individuals, who may plunge nations into hoſtilities, for no other reaſon but the mere gratification of their own pride and ambition.

Mr. Burke is very copious in his remarks on the mode of electing the members of the National Aſſembly, and on the deſcriptions of men of which it is compoſed. He particularly objects to ſo great a number of practitioners of the law being returned, nor is he ſatisfied that there ſhould be ſo many phyſicians and country

clergymen. The repreſentation of the people of France in the National Aſſembly appears, however, notwithſtanding all Mr. Burke's objections, to be very complete and comprehenſive; men of all ranks and profeſſions are repreſented, and returned as members; and there ſeems no good reaſon why we ſhould ſuppoſe, that theſe country divines[55], and practitioners of law and

[55] Mr. Burke ſometimes profeſſes a great reſpect for the church, and for churchmen, whether of France or of England: but it would not be eaſy to point out a more uncandid, not to ſay unjuſt, ſtatement, relative to a conſiderable body of reſpectable French clergymen, than occurs in a paſſage of Mr. Burke's book. Speaking of the election of the repreſentatives of the clergy to the TIERS ETAT, he ſays, 'That election was ſo 'contrived, as to ſend a very large proportion of mere 'country curates to the great and arduous work of 'new-modelling a ſtate; men who never had ſeen the 'ſtate ſo much as in a picture; men who knew no-'thing

and phyſic, will not, to ſay the leaſt, make full as good legiſlators, as many of thoſe fox-hunters and ſportſmen, who have often appeared in the former parliaments of Great Britain; and who have been much

'thing of the world beyond the bounds of an obſcure 'village; who, immerſed in hopeleſs poverty, could 'regard all property, whether ſecular or eccleſiaſtical, 'with no other eye than that of ENVY; among whom 'muſt be MANY, who, for THE SMALLEST HOPE 'of THE MEANEST DIVIDEND IN PLUNDER, would 'readily join in ANY ATTEMPTS upon a body of 'wealth, in which they could hardly look to have 'any ſhare, except in a GENERAL SCRAMBLE.' REFLECTIONS, &c. p. 67. It can hardly be ſuppoſed, that any of the French ATHEISTS, or INFIDELS, would have attempted to give a more diſhonourable account than this of their clergy. It may not be improper to obſerve here, that the perſons whom Mr. Burke, according to the French phraſeology, terms curates, are the ſame claſs of men, who in England would be termed rectors, or vicars; in other words, the parochial clergy.

more attentive to the preſervation of the game, than to the preſervation of the liberties, or to the promotion of the intereſts, of their country. If the people of France, in returning their members to the National Aſſembly, are apt to ſhew a preference for profeſſional men, that is no preſumptive argument of any propenſity in the French nation to a diſregard of literature, or inattention to its uſe and its advantages. As to the French clergymen, who are returned, Mr. Burke himſelf informs us, that he met with many men of learning and merit among the ſuperior French clergy; and there can be no reaſonable doubt, but that there are alſo many men of merit among the inferior clergy, who will diſcharge the truſt repoſed in them, as members of the national aſſembly, with integrity and with ability.

WHETHER

WHETHER in the new conſtitution of France ſufficient care has been taken, to keep the legiſlative and the executive powers diſtinct, or whether there are any material defects in the conſtitution, I pretend not to decide. A man may approve of the great principles on which the revolution has been conducted, and may think very highly of the general views and conduct of the National Aſſembly, without approving of every particular meaſure that they may have adopted. If any defects ſhould be diſcovered in the new conſtitution of France, there is ſo much information, knowledge, and good ſenſe, diffuſed throughout that nation, that there is little reaſon to doubt, but that theſe defects will be rectified, and ſuch a conſtitution finally eſtabliſhed, as will in an eminent degree promote the freedom and the happineſs of the people. Whatever new arrangements

they may make in their mode of government, there can be no reaſon to apprehend, that ſo enlightened a people will ever deſcend, from the felicity and the dignity of freedom, to the wretchedneſs and the diſhonour neceſſarily attendant on a deſpotic government.

Mr. Burke's "Reflections on the "Revolution in France," is a very ſplendid compoſition in point of language; he often diſplays a very luxuriant imagination; but he is extremely deficient in juſt reaſoning. He has a great profuſion of rhetoric, but is very far from having an equal proportion of logic; and his ſtatement of facts, or what he relates as facts, relative to the French revolution, has often much more of the appearance of an hiſtorical romance, than of a juſt or impartial account of the real ſtate of things. Beſides his tropes and figures, he has taken

great

great pains to engage the paſſions of his readers in oppoſition to the French revolution. He has a great diſlike to Old Jewry ſermons; but I have never met with any Old Jewry ſermon that contained ſo much of the falſe pathetic, as is to be found in this publication of Mr. Burke. With a very fine imagination, he appears to labour under ſtrong prejudices; and, indeed, of all writers, antient or modern, he is the moſt eloquent and ingenious advocate for the utility and the advantages that reſult from prejudice [56].

In the courſe of his book Mr. Burke has repeatedly expreſſed a high veneration for kings, and no inconſiderable degree of reverence for the order of nobility. There was, however, a time, when he did not appear to have ſuch a profound reſpect

[56] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 129, 130.

either

either for kings or nobles. In his very maſterly ſpeech, in 1780, on preſenting to the houſe of commons a plan for the reform of the civil liſt eſtabliſhment, he obſerves, that "kings are naturally lovers "of low company[57];" and in the ſame ſpeech he alſo ſays, that "many of the "nobility are as perfectly willing to act "the part of flatterers, tale-bearers, para-"ſites, pimps, and buffoons, as any of "the loweſt and vileſt of mankind can "poſſibly be[58]." I do not in the leaſt controvert the truth of theſe poſitions of Mr. Burke; but I muſt obſerve, that they certainly tend to diminiſh that "awe," with which, he ſays, we "look up to "kings[59]," and ſomewhat of that profound reſpect which he ſeems inclined to recom-

[57] Speech of Edmund Burke, Eſq; p. 68. 8vo. 1780.

[58] Ibid. p. 69.

[59] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 128.

mend

mend for the nobility; and to lead us to think, that no powers or privileges ought to be conferred on either kings or lords, that may probably be employed not to the benefit, but to the injury of the community.

As Mr. Burke has given a very injurious repreſentation of the proceedings of the National Aſſembly of France, and of the Revolution in that country, ſo he has alſo given an account of the Revolution in England, in 1688, that is highly diſhonourable to our anceſtors, and repugnant to the moſt important principles of the Britiſh conſtitution. He particularly labours to refute the opinion, that the crown of England is derived from the choice of the people, and contends in very ſtrong terms for a claim of hereditary right; and what is ſingularly curious, he grounds his arguments, in ſupport of this claim, on the circum-

circumſtances and events that attended and were conſequent to the Revolution. He ſpeaks of the act of ſettlement, as intended to form an eſtabliſhment, to ſecure that kind of ſucceſſion, which was "to PRE-"CLUDE A CHOICE OF THE PEOPLE "FOR EVER[60]; and of the "Declaration "of Rights (the act of the 1ſt of Wil-"liam and Mary, ſeſſ. 2. ch. 2.)" he ſays, that it "is the corner-ſtone of our "conſtitution, as reinforced, explained, "improved, and its fundamental principles "FOR EVER SETTLED[61]." He alſo ſpeaks of the rights and liberties of the ſubject, and the ſucceſſion of the crown, as being "bound indiſſolubly together[62]," as if the liberties of the people would ceaſe to exiſt, if there were any alteration of the hereditary ſucceſſion.

[60] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 33.

[61] Ibid. p. 21. [62] Ibid. p. 22.

THE

THE whole tenor of our hiſtory will ſhew, that a claim to the crown founded merely on hereditary right, without the concurrence and approbation of the people and the parliament, is an abſurd claim, which can never be ſupported. At leaſt ſeven inſtances occur, from the time of William the Norman to the preſent period, in which the regular line of hereditary ſucceſſion has been broken [63]; and theſe

[63] William I. commonly called the Conqueror, who may be conſidered as at the head of that ſacred line of hereditary ſucceſſion, for which Mr. Burke ſeems to have ſo much reverence, was the baſtard ſon of Robert, duke of Normandy. He was not ſucceeded by his eldeſt ſon, but by a younger ſon, generally known by the name of William Rufus, and he was afterwards ſucceeded by Henry I. the youngeſt ſon of William I. though Robert, the eldeſt ſon of the Conqueror, was yet living. Henry I. left a daughter, Maud, who was married to the emperor Henry IV. but ſhe did not ſucceed to the crown of England, but the

theſe deviations have been repeatedly authorized by expreſs acts of the legiſlature. Indeed, thoſe who attend to the frequency with which theſe deviations from the order of lineal ſucceſſion occur in our hiſtory, can hardly avoid feeling ſome aſtoniſhment, that any man ſhould even dream of the "unbroken unity[64]" of the ſucceſſion

the throne was aſcended by Stephen, earl of Blois, who was the ſon of Adela, the fourth daughter of William I. Stephen was ſucceeded by Henry Plantagenet, ſon to the empreſs Maud. Richard II. was dethroned, and was ſucceeded by Henry, duke of Lancaſter, ſon of John of Gaunt. Henry VI. was dethroned, and ſucceeded by Edward, duke of York, under the title of Edward IV. Soon after that prince's death, Richard, duke of Glouceſter, mounted the throne, under the title of Richard III. He was killed in Boſworth field, and ſucceeded by Henry VII. whoſe title to the crown could be very ill ſupported upon any principles of hereditary ſucceſſion.

"Mr. Burke ſays, that the princeſs Sophia was named in the act of ſettlement, "that the monarchy "might

to the crown of England. The truth is, that the people of this country have in general preferred an hereditary ſucceſſion of their princes, in order to avoid thoſe tumults and convulſions which might be attendant on an elective monarchy. But the deviations from a regular, hereditary ſucceſſion, are ſo many, as to afford ſufficient evidence, that it was the ſenſe both of the people and the parliament, from the earlieſt times to the preſent, that they had a right to alter the order of ſucceſſion, whenever the ſafety and welfare of the nation ſhould require it.

THE bill of excluſion, which paſſed the houſe of commons in 1680, affords a full proof of the general ſenſe of the nation at that period, of the right of parliament, as acting for the people, to change

"might preſerve an UNBROKEN UNITY THROUGH "ALL AGES." Reflections, &c. p. 34.

the

the order of ſucceſſion. There was at that time no law which excluded a Papiſt from the throne; and James, duke of York, was then the next heir to the crown, according to the order of lineal ſucceſſion. But, by the Excluſion bill, it was enacted, 'That James, duke of York, Albany, and 'Ulſter, ſhould be incapable of inheriting 'the crowns of England, Scotland, and 'Ireland, with the dependencies; and of 'enjoying any of the titles, rights, prero-'gatives, and revenues, belonging to the 'ſaid crowns.' In the debates upon this bill, it was repeatedly obſerved in the houſe of commons, that "the ſucceſſion "to the crown had been formerly often "changed by acts of parliament;" and Mr. Hume, who was no great friend to the claims of the people, nor a very impartial reporter of parliamentary debates on the ſide of the people, yet ſtates, in his account

count of the debates on the bill of Exclusion, the following as ſome of the arguments then uſed by the advocates for that bill: 'In England, the legiſlative power is 'lodged in king, lords, and commons, 'which comprehend every order of the 'community: And there is no pretext for 'exempting any circumſtance of government, not even the ſucceſſion of the crown, 'from ſo full and deciſive a juriſdiction [64]. 'Even

[64] Sir Thomas Smith, who was ſecretary of ſtate in the reign of queen Elizabeth, expreſſes himſelf in the following terms concerning the power and authority of parliaments, in his Treatiſe of the "Commonwealth of England:" 'The parliament abro-'gateth old laws and maketh new; giveth order for 'things paſt, and for things hereafter to be followed; 'changeth right and poſſeſſions of private men, legi-'timateth baſtards, eſtabliſheth forms of religion, al-'tereth weights and meaſures, GIVETH FORM OF 'SUCCESSION TO THE CROWN, defineth of doubtful 'right, whereof is no law already made; appointeth

'Even expreſs declarations have, in this 'particular, been made of parliamentary 'authority: inſtances have occurred, 'where it has been exerted: and though 'prudential reaſons may juſtly be alleged, 'why ſuch innovations ſhould never 'be attempted but on extraordinary oc-'caſions, THE POWER AND RIGHT ARE 'FOR EVER VESTED IN THE COMMU-'NITY [65].'

Mr. Burke remarks, that 'If ever 'there was a time favourable for eſtabliſh-

'ſubſidies, tailles, taxes, and impoſitions; giveth 'moſt free pardons and abſolutions, reſtoreth in blood 'and name; as the higheſt court, condemneth or ab-'ſolveth whom the prince will put to that trial. And, 'to be ſhort, all that ever the people of Rome might 'do, either in Centuriatis Comitiis, or Tribunitiis, 'the ſame may be done by the parliament of 'England.' Smith's Common-wealth of England, p. 77. edit. Lond. 1633.

[65] Hiſtory of England, vol. VIII. p. 132. edit. 8vo. 1763.

'ing

'ing the principle, that a king of popular 'choice was the only legal king, without 'all doubt it was at the Revolution [66].' I agree with Mr. Burke, that this was a very favourable time for that purpoſe; and think, that more ought to have been done in ſupport of the rights of the people, than was done at that period, and that additional ſecurities ſhould have been required by the nation, in order to prevent future abuſes of power, or exertions of regal tyranny. When, therefore, I join with others in commemorating the Revolution, I do not do it as commemorating a tranſaction, by which the people obtained all that they have a right to claim, but as an event upon the whole very favourable to liberty, and by which the rights of the people were more clearly aſcertained than at any preceding period. This is a very

[66] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 23.

juſt ground for commemorating the Revolution, though we may have a full conviction, that it was attended with defects, and have a ſincere deſire, that thoſe defects ſhould be rectified.

Mr. Burke ſays, "So far is it from "being true, that we acquired a right by "the Revolution to elect our kings, that "if we had poſſeſſed it before, the Engliſh "nation did at that time "moſt ſolemnly "renounce and abdicate it, for themſelves "and for all their poſterity for ever[67]." This moſt ſtrange idea is grounded on the act of ſucceſſion, by which the parliament, in the language generally uſed in ſuch acts, bind themſelves, "their heirs and their "poſterity[68]." But it is not to be ſuppoſed, that they had any juſt claim, or that they imagined they had any claim,

[67] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 27.

[68] Ibid. p. 33.

to

to bind the people of England, in any matters important to the community, in ſuch a manner as could not hereafter be altered. The claim would have been abſurd: but they conceived, from the authority with which they were inveſted, that they had a right to make ſuch arrangements, reſpecting the ſucceſſion, or any other important points mentioned in the act, as they judged to be beneficial to the nation; and that theſe arrangements ſhould be binding upon the nation, till ſome other alteration ſhould be made by the ſame authority; that is, by the authority of the people and parliament of England. But, indeed, the competency of parliament to alter the ſucceſſion, and to make new laws and regulations concerning it, has been eſtabliſhed by an expreſs act of the legiſlature, and it has been made highly penal to advance a contrary doctrine; for by

an act paſſed in the ſixth year of the reign of queen Anne, it was enacted, that if any perſon ſhould affirm, 'That the kings or 'queens of this realm, with and by the 'authority of parliament, are not able to 'make laws and ſtatutes of ſufficient force 'and validity to limit and bind the crown, 'and the deſcent, limitation, inheritance, 'and government thereof, every ſuch per-'ſon or perſons ſhall incur the danger 'and penalty of præmunire, mentioned in 'the ſtatute of præmunire, made in the 'ſixteenth year of the reign of king 'Richard the Second [68].'

It is obſerved by Mr. Burke, that in the "Act declaring the Rights and Liber-"ties of the Subject, and ſettling the Suc-"ceſſion of the Crown," commonly called the Bill of Rights, 'not one word is ſaid, 'nor one ſuggeſtion made, of a general

[68] Cay's edition of the Statutes, vol. III. p. 549.

'right

'right "to chooſe our own governors; 'to caſhier them for miſconduct; and to 'form a government for ourſelves[69]." But theſe ideas were in reality neceſſarily implied in the act, though not directly and particularly expreſſed. In this act it is ſtated, that the declaration and reſolution, by which William and Mary were raiſed to the throne, were made by the "lords ſpiritual and tem-"poral, and commons aſſembled at Weſt-"minſter, lawfully and freely REPRESENT-"ING ALL THE ESTATES OF THE PEO-"PLE OF THIS REALM." It was by their authority that the crown was transferred from king James the Second to the prince and princeſs of Orange. This was certainly a claim made and aſſerted by the nation, or by the parliament acting in their name, and by their authority, of a right of chooſing their own governors. For if

[69] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 21.

they had a right to dethrone James, and to confer the crown on the prince of Orange, who was not the lineal ſucceſſor, they had an equal right to take any other perſon, if they had judged it beneficial to the nation. Whether they would chooſe William, prince of Orange, or any other perſon, was not a queſtion of right, but of political expediency. William's wife Mary, who approached more nearly to the character of a lineal ſucceſſor than her huſband, though made nominally queen, was excluded, by the act of parliament which raiſed them to the throne, from real authority; for it was expreſsly enacted, that "the entire, perfect, and full exerciſe of the "royal power and government, ſhould be "only in, and executed by his majeſty."

Before William and Mary were raiſed to the throne, it was debated in both houſes, "Whether there was not an ori-

"ginal

"ginal contract between king and people?" and in both houſes it was reſolved in the affirmative. By both houſes it was reſolved, "That king James had broken the "original contract;" and upon theſe votes was grounded the final reſolution, that the throne was become vacant. In the bill of rights, the acts of miſconduct and tyranny of king James II. were particularly ſtated; and the whole of the proceedings, taken together, amounted to a full and explicit declaration, that a king of England might, conſtitutionally, be dethroned for tyranny; or, in other words, for a violation of the contract between him and the people. And if the parliament of England juſtly claimed, and exerciſed, a right of dethroning a king for tyranny, and of appointing whom they pleaſed to ſucceed him, there can be no doubt, but that they have an equal right to make ſuch alterations in their adminiſ-

miniſtration, or mode of government, as they ſhall judge to be moſt advantageous to the community. It may alſo be obſerved, that if the parliament and people of England had a right to dethrone James the Second for tyranny and miſconduct, they have an equal right to dethrone any other prince, of any other family, in ſimilar circumſtances; and of the degree of tyranny and miſconduct, which would juſtify them in ſuch a caſe, they are the ſole and proper judges.

Mr. Burke ſays, that 'the Revolution 'was made to preſerve our ANTIENT indiſ-'putable laws and liberties, and that 'ANTIENT conſtitution of government, 'which is our SOLE SECURITY for law and 'liberty [70]'. But is there a man of ſenſe in the kingdom, excepting Mr. Burke, who can poſſibly be of opinion, that at ſuch a period as the Revolution, the people had not

[70] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 44.

a right

a right to adopt every meaſure that would tend to promote the general intereſts and freedom of the nation, or that we have no other ſecurity for law and liberty, or no other claim to our rights, but what is merely grounded on the conduct, or the acquiſitions of our anceſtors? Our ingenious author, indeed, takes abundant pains to point out the advantages of claiming our rights, not from reaſon, or from nature, but from INHERITANCE. In an age, in which men are led to ſcrutinize exactly into the nature of government, and to trace it to its firſt principles, he would lead them to the ideas of barbarous and Gothic ages, and to antient ſuperſtitions, which even the votaries of Popery now find it neceſſary to abandon. An appeal to the rights of men, if proſecuted to its natural and legitimate conſequences, will give liberty to the whole human race; but

but an appeal to the rights and privileges of anceſtors, ſuch rights and privileges as can be clearly and diſtinctly aſcertained and proved, will give liberty only to a ſmall part of the human ſpecies, and much of what is communicated will be neceſſarily defective and imperfect.

Mr. BURKE obſerves, that revolutions "can rarely, if ever, be performed without force;" and that "no government "could ſtand a moment, if it could be "blown down with any thing ſo looſe "and indefinite, as an opinion of MISCONDUCT". It is true, that revolutions ought not to be attempted, on account of trifling inſtances of miſconduct in government; and there is little reaſon to apprehend, that any attempts of that kind will be made on ſuch a ground. Nations do

[1] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 38, 42.

not

not dethrone their kings but for ſome important reaſon, for unjuſt extenſions of power, or flagrant violations of the duties of the regal office. Mr. Locke juſtly remarks, that 'Revolutions happen not upon 'every little miſmanagement of public 'affairs. Great miſtakes in the ruling 'part, many wrong and inconvenient laws, 'and all the ſlips of human frailty, will 'be borne by the people without mutiny 'or murmur. But if a long train of 'abuſes, prevarications, and artifices, all 'tending the ſame way, make the deſign 'viſible to the people, and they cannot 'but feel what they lie under, and ſee 'whither they are going; it is not to be 'wondered, that they ſhould then rouze 'themſelves, and endeavour to put the 'rule into ſuch hands which may ſecure 'to them the ends for which government 'was at firſt erected; and without which,

'antient

'antient names, and ſpecious forms, are 'ſo far from being better, that they are 'much worſe than the ſtate of nature, or 'pure anarchy; the inconveniences being 'all as great and as near, but the remedy 'farther off, and more difficult [72].'

On a full conſideration of all that has been advanced by Mr. Burke, on the ſubject of the Revolution in England, in 1688, we may venture to affirm, that his account of that tranſaction, and his ſtatement of the principles on which it was effected, and which reſult from it, are not grounded upon the ideas of our anceſtors, nor upon the ideas of thoſe who were the moſt inſtrumental in bringing about that great event; and that they are contrary to all juſt ſentiments reſpecting the rights of human nature, and the true origin and deſign of civil government. Mr. Burke

[72] Treatiſe on Civil Government, Book II. § 225.

has

has intimated his apprehenſions, that the French nation have formed erroneous ideas of the opinions and diſpoſitions of the people of England, from "certain publica-"tions[73]," which have appeared in this country; meaning, apparently, the publications of the Conſtitutional and the Revolution Societies. But, I muſt confeſs, that I have met with no publications that appeared to me ſo groſsly to miſrepreſent the ſentiments and diſpoſitions of the people of England, reſpecting either the late French Revolution, or our own Revolution in 1688, as Mr. Burke's "Reflections on "the Revolution in France."

It is aſſerted by Mr. Burke, that the body of the people of England utterly diſclaim, and will reſiſt the practical aſſertion of "with their lives and fortunes," thoſe principles, which Dr. Price has ſtated

[73] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 126.

to

to be the principles of the Revolution; namely, that we have a right "to choose "our own governors; to cashier them for "misconduct; and to frame a government "for ourselves[74]." But I am so fully convinced, that Mr. Burke's ideas upon this subject are totally ill founded, that if ever the sense of the inhabitants of this country should be taken upon the following questions, Whether all legitimate power is, or is not, derived from the people? Whether all those, who are invested with the powers of government, are accountable to the nation for the discharge of the offices entrusted to them? Whether the people have not a right to dethrone a king for tyranny? and, Whether the people and parliament of England have not also a right to adopt that mode of government,

[74] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 20, 21.

which

which they conceive to be moſt conducive to their own advantage? I have no doubt, but that theſe queſtions would be anſwered by the people of England in the affirmative, with a voice that ſhould be heard to the moſt diſtant parts of the kingdom, and that no prince or miniſter would dare to contradict.

Mr. BURKE ſays, that the preſent king "holds his crown in contempt of the "choice of the Revolution Society [75]." But I hope, that he does not hold it in contempt of the people of England, or of their choice or approbation. Sir William Temple informs us, that Monſ. Gourville, who had reſided a conſiderable time in England, and obſerved much of the temper and diſpoſition of the people, ſaid to him at Bruſſels, "A King of England, who "will be THE MAN OF HIS PEOPLE, is

[75] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 19.

" the greateſt King in the World; but, " if he will be ſomething more, by G—, " HE IS NOTHING AT ALL [76]." This ſpeech Sir William reported to Charles II. becauſe he knew, he ſays, that the king eſteemed Monſ. Gourville, as having " the " ſoundeſt head of any Frenchman he had " ever ſeen." Theſe ſentiments of Monſ. Gourville, reſpecting the kings of England, Charles did not, however, at firſt, ſeem perfectly to reliſh; but, after a little conſideration, he appeared to acquieſce in them; and, if theſe ſentiments could be acquieſced in, even apparently, by a prince of the houſe of Stuart, I hope no prince of the houſe of Hanover will forget, that his family derive their preſent dignity from the parliament and people of England, and that to ſecure and eſtabliſh their rights

[76] Temple's Memoirs, part II. p. 33, 34, edit. 1700.

was

was the deſign and the end of their elevation.

Mr. Burke appears extremely deſirous to repreſent government as a ſcience involved in very profound myſteries; and, indeed, of all the theories of government which I have met with, that of Mr. Burke ſeems to be the moſt abſtruſe, and the moſt obſcure. In ſupport of ſuch a myſterious repreſentation of the nature of government, he ſays, that "The nature of man is intricate; the objects of ſociety are of "the greateſt poſſible complexity[77]." But, however intricate may be the nature of man, however complex the objects of human ſociety, there are certain maxims and principles, reſpecting government, which are obvious to the moſt common underſtandings, whenever a due attention be paid to the ſubject. Among theſe

[77] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 91.

maxims, the following may be enumerated, and which are the ſentiments of Mr. Locke.

'That all legitimate government is derived 'from the conſent of the people; that 'men are naturally equal, and that no one 'has a right to injure another in his life, 'health, liberty, or poſſeſſions; and that 'no man in civil ſociety ought to be ſub-'ject to the arbitrary will of others, but 'only to known and eſtabliſhed laws, made 'by general conſent, for the common be-'nefit. That no taxes are to be levied on 'the people, without the conſent of the 'majority, given by themſelves, or by 'their deputies. That the ruling power 'ought to govern by declared and received 'laws, and not by extemporary dictates, 'and undetermined reſolutions. That 'kings and princes, magiſtrates and rulers 'of every claſs, have no juſt authority

'but

'but what is delegated to them by the 'people; and which, when not employed 'for their benefit, the people have always 'a right to resume, in whatever hands 'it may be placed.' These principles of Mr. LOCKE are certainly much more perspicuous, than the account of the rights of men given by Mr. Burke [78], and they are founded on unquestionable reason.

MR. BURKE observes, that 'If civil 'society be the offspring of convention, 'that convention must be its law [79].' But allowing civil society to be the offspring of convention, if a civil convention had been made in any country, in the last century, or in two or ten centuries before, which was found to be injurious to the majority of the community, they would

[78] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 87, 88, 89.

[79] Ibid. p. 87.

have an undoubted right to demand a new convention, and to ſettle ſuch a form of civil ſociety, and eſtabliſh ſuch laws, as ſhould be more equitable, and more conducive to the general welfare. Mr. Burke alſo ſays, 'How can any man claim, under 'the conventions of civil ſociety, rights 'which do not ſo much as ſuppoſe its 'exiſtence?' To which it may be anſwered, that though every man may be obliged, ſo far as he can do it conſcientiouſly, to comply with the particular conventions of that civil ſociety in which he lives, while he continues in it, yet that is no reaſon whatever why the majority of that or any other ſociety, if they have, or ſuppoſe they have, acquired more juſt ideas of the nature of government than were poſſeſſed by their anceſtors, ſhould not make ſuch alterations in the original convention, or adopt any ſuch new mode

of

of government, as they may conceive to be beſt adapted to promote the common benefit. Nor does it follow, becauſe a man in civil ſociety is not, in a diſpute with another, to be judge in his own cauſe [80], that therefore the majority of the members of any civil community have not a right to eſtabliſh a government for their own advantage.

But Mr. Burke likewiſe ſays, that 'as 'to the ſhare of power, authority, and 'direction, which each individual ought 'to have in the management of the ſtate, 'that I muſt deny to be among the direct 'original rights of man in civil ſociety [81].' Certainly no individual man has a right to claim the office of magiſtrate, or miniſter of ſtate, or other office of authority in the government; but it muſt be an original right

[80] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 88.

[81] Ibid. p. 87.

of men in civil ſociety, to adopt thoſe meaſures that are moſt conducive to the welfare of the whole, and of conſequence to appoint ſuch men to public offices, or to eſtabliſh ſuch a mode of government, as the majority ſhall judge beſt calculated to advance the general happineſs.

THE RIGHTS OF MEN is a phraſe to which Mr. Burke ſeems to have an extreme averſion, though it is, perhaps, one of thoſe expreſſive phraſes, which are not eaſily altered for the better. But notwithſtanding his diſlike to this expreſſion, there are certainly natural rights, independently of all poſitive law or appointment. Mr. Burke, however, ſeems to have a much higher idea of the value and importance of property, than of thoſe general rights to which all men have an equal claim. He appears to be of opinion, that property can never be too well ſecured, though he

is

is far from having the ſame anxiety to ſecure the rights of human nature. But is not perſonal liberty as ſacred a poſſeſſion, as any ſpecies of property that we can inherit from our anceſtors? Is not the right of the mechanic and the labourer to the profits of their labour, to the eſtimation of the value of their labour, or to the choice of the manner in which they will exerciſe their talents, as clear as the right to any other property? And yet theſe rights are often invaded by unjuſt and unequal laws, or by acts of power that receive the ſanction of government. This is a ſubject into which I feel myſelf inclined to enter upon a more full diſcuſſion; but it would carry me beyond the limits which I have preſcribed to myſelf in this publication.

Mr. Burke remarks, that 'the body 'of the community, whenever it can 'come to act, can meet with no effectual 'reſiſt-

'reſiſtance; but 'till power and right are 'the ſame, the whole body of them has 'no right inconſiſtent with virtue, and the 'firſt of all virtues, prudence[22].' Whether prudence be the firſt of all virtues, may reaſonably be queſtioned; it is always the firſt of all virtues with ſelfiſh men; but I ſhall readily admit, that the body of the community, any more than private individuals, have no right to violate the rules of juſtice. It is, however, perfectly agreeable to the rules of virtue, and of juſtice, that the majority in any country, or of any community, ſhould eſtabliſh that mode of government, which they conceive to be beſt calculated to promote the general happineſs; and this is all that is contended for by the advocates for the rights of men.

[22] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 92.

In the courſe of his animadverſions on Dr. Price's ſermon, preached to the Revolution Society in 1789, Mr. Burke expreſſes an high degree of indignation againſt political ſermons. 'Politics and 'the pulpit,' he ſays, 'are terms that have 'little agreement. No ſound ought to be 'heard in the church but the healing voice 'of Chriſtian charity.—Surely the church 'is a place where one day's truce ought to 'be allowed to the diſſenſions and animo-'ſities of mankind[51].' Mr. Burke is miſtaken in ſuppoſing, as it appears he does, that the Revolution Society have regularly had annual ſermons. Only two ſermons have been preached to that ſociety for many years paſt. Many ſermons, however, are preached in the church of England againſt the Diſſenters; many of theſe ſermons are printed; and thoſe who give

[51] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 14.

them-

themſelves the trouble of peruſing them will find, that, in general, they contain very little of "the healing voice of Chriſ-"tian charity." As to political ſermons, it is an incontrovertible fact, that a much greater number of ſermons of this kind are preached by clergymen of the church of England, than by any Diſſenting miniſters. In the ſermons that are preached before the two houſes of parliament, on the 30th of January, and the 29th of May, politics are, I believe, almoſt invariably introduced; and this is alſo the caſe, on thoſe days, in many other pulpits throughout the kingdom. It ſeems to have been the intention of the legiſlature, and of the governors of the church, that it ſhould be ſo; for politics are even introduced into the prayers appointed for thoſe days by public authority. Nor, indeed, is it eaſy, either for a clergyman of the church

church of England, or a Diſſenting miniſter, to avoid entering upon politics, when the very purpoſe, for which their congregations are aſſembled, is the celebration of a political event; and if they were wholly to decline politics on ſuch occaſions, they would not give very general ſatisfaction to their auditors. But if archbiſhops and biſhops, and deans, and archdeacons, and inferior clergymen, employ themſelves on the 30th of January, and the 29th of May, and on ſimilar faſts and feſtivals, in inculcating the principles of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance, or of a more moderate and limited Toryiſm, or, as in candour we muſt acknowledge is ſometimes the caſe, in propagating political ſentiments of a much better tendency, it cannot be an evil of great magnitude, that ſome Diſſenting miniſters ſhould occaſionally employ themſelves in explaining

ing to their auditors the proper duties of men, as citizens, in a free country; if they ſhould point out to them the true nature and deſign of government; and exhort them to a juſt zeal in ſupport of thoſe great principles of civil and religious liberty, which are eſſentially connected with the beſt intereſts of their country. Whatever cenſure ſuch Diſſenting miniſters may incur, on occaſions of this kind, from the ſervile flatterers of power, they will not be wholly deſtitute of approbation, or applauſe, from thoſe who have a juſt ſenſe of the dignity, and of the rights of human nature.

As Mr. Burke ſpeaks in very honourable terms of the ſuperior clergy of France, though he does not expreſs himſelf quite ſo handſomely of thoſe of the inferior order, ſo he alſo ſpeaks in very high terms of the advantages reſulting to religion from the

the prelates of the church of England. He ſeems much delighted, that in this country, religion "exalts her mitred head "in courts and parliaments [84];" and that the nation pays ſo much honour to "the "high magiſtrates of its church [85]." It may, however, be remarked, that theſe "high magiſtrates of the church," are a ſort of people of whom we read nothing in the New Teſtament; and, indeed, Mr. Burke's ideas of religion, in ſeveral reſpects, ſeem much better adapted to the church of Rome, than to the principles of any Proteſtant church in Europe. But Mr. Burke thinks that theſe dignified prelates, on account of their rank and riches, are the more likely to have their doctrines properly attended to by "the wealthy and "powerful of long ſtanding." I am, how-

[84] Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 153.

[85] Ibid. p. 154.

ever,

ever, not very certain, that our nobility, and perſons of rank and fortune, receive much of their religious inſtruction from the biſhops. I ſuſpect, that the information which they receive from the clergy, on the topics of religion and morality, is chiefly from thoſe who are not decorated with mitres; and that the piety and virtue, manifeſted by our lay lords, is but a very ſmall part of it derived, from the occaſional ſermons, or occaſional paſtoral converſation, of our right reverend prelates [86]. Nor will I take

[86] Mr. Burke is inclined to make a moſt liberal proviſion for the biſhops; for them he approves of ſuch revenues as thoſe of Wincheſter, or Durham; but, in his theory of government, he does not make, at leaſt in this world, a very comfortable proviſion for the poor. 'They muſt reſpect,' he ſays, 'that pro-'perty of WHICH THEY CANNOT PARTAKE. They 'muſt labour to obtain what by labour can be ob-'tained; and when they find, as they commonly do,

'THE

I take upon me to determine, how much the piety of the lay lords may have been increaſed, by obſerving the uniformity with which the generality of our right reverend prelates have voted, in former parliaments, in ſupport of every meaſure of every miniſter for the time being, without diverting much of their attention from their theological ſtudies, by any laborious inquiries into the rectitude of the meaſures which they ſupported.

Since the Revolution in France, many of the moſt enlightened inhabitants of that country have ſhewn a great deſire to be on pacific terms with England, and have even appeared extremely ſolicitous, that real friendſhip and harmony may ſubſiſt between the two nations. I ſincerely wiſh,

'THE SUCCESS DISPROPORTIONED TO THE ENDEAVOUR, they muſt be taught their conſolation in 'THE FINAL PROPORTIONS OF ETERNAL JUSTICE.' Reflections, &c. p. 351.

that theſe ſentiments may be cordially cheriſhed and cultivated on our part, and that perpetual peace and friendſhip may be eſtabliſhed between Great Britain and France, and the general welfare and freedom of the human race promoted by their united efforts. An alliance between Great Britain, and a free country, as France now is, but little ſeparated from us, muſt be much more honourable and advantageous, than an alliance with a German electorate, at a conſiderable diſtance from us, whoſe views are military and deſpotic, with which we have no common intereſts, and no natural connexion.

INSTANCES have recently occurred, of foreign powers interfering, in the internal diſputes of other countries, in order to maintain the authority, or the deſpotic claims, of princes and ſovereigns againſt their ſubjects. Such interpoſitions ought ever

ever to be conſidered as flagrant violations of juſtice, and of the law of nations. No prince who requires any ſuch interpoſition, in his own behalf, and againſt his ſubjects, can ever be worthy of aſſiſtance or ſupport. In the preſent ſtate of the world nothing can be more alarming, than combinations of powerful and military princes, to prevent the inhabitants of different countries from aſſerting their rights, improving their forms of government, and advancing human liberty, and human happineſs. Such iniquitous interpoſitions may, however, poſſibly be termed, Preſerving the Balance of Europe. But all liberty may be baniſhed from the face of the globe, if the great tyrants of the earth are ſuffered to join together, to ſupport each other in their different uſurpations, and in their various oppreſſions of their ſubjects. Such combinations carry in them a very high degree

of moral turpitude, and ought to meet with the moſt vigorous and determined oppoſition from all the ſincere friends to the rights of mankind, and to the general intereſts of humanity.

A DIA-

A

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

AN ASSOCIATOR

AND

A WELL-INFORMED

ENGLISHMAN,

ON

THE GROUNDS OF THE LATE

ASSOCIATIONS,

AND

THE COMMENCEMENT OF

A WAR WITH FRANCE.

[FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1793.]

A

DIALOGUE, &c.

Mr. MORDAUNT, Mr. GRANTLEY.

Mr. MORDAUNT.

FROM the friendſhip which has ſo long ſubſiſted between us, I am induced, Mr. Grantley, to take the liberty of aſking you a few queſtions relative to your political conduct; and which, I know, your candour will excuſe.

What were your inducements for ſubſcribing to the late Aſſociation of the town of ******, to which I ſaw your name affixed in the papers?

Mr. GRANTLEY. My inducements, Sir? A deſire to join a body of peaceable and ſubſtantial inhabitants and traders of the town, in order to ſecure our common property from any attacks of lawleſs violence, and the excellent government under which we live, from any of the wild ſchemes of Republicans and Levellers. My property, my good friend, has coſt me a great deal of time and pains to accumulate; and I am not willing to be deprived of it, or that it ſhould be put to hazard, in order to comply with the reveries, or to gratify the wiſhes, of thoſe who have no property to loſe.

Mr. MORDAUNT. I take it for granted, my dear friend, that your deſigns were good; and you were certainly right to endeavour

endeavour to ſecure your property, if it was in danger. But I have no conception that it was in any danger; and it appears to me, that the paper you ſigned was drawn up in terms, and contained ſentiments, not very congenial to what uſed to be the free ſpirit of this country. No man is more an enemy than myſelf to any acts of violence againſt the perſons or property of individuals, and to the idea of promoting liberty by a diſregard to law. But we ſhould remember, that the ſecurity of property, which has long obtained in this country, has reſulted from the freedom of our conſtitution, and not from aſſociations for the ſupport of prerogative. If our anceſtors had not been wiſely jealous of authority, and ſolicitous to keep it within proper bounds, we ſhould not at this time have any ſecurity either for our property, or for our perſonal liberties.

Mr.

Mr. GRANTLEY. Sir, the very title of our Aſſociation implies, that we had not forgotten the importance of liberty; for it is ſtyled "an Aſſociation for the preſerva-"tion of Liberty and Property."

Mr. MORDAUNT. I obſerved that it was ſo ſtyled, but, as I think, with very little conſiſtency; for I have no idea of that ſort of liberty, which excludes the freedom of ſpeaking, and of writing. You ſay in your declaration, "We will exert our "moſt diligent endeavours to ſuppreſs ſe-"ditious clubs, ſeditious converſation, and "ſeditious publications."

Mr. GRANTLEY. But ſurely, my good friend, Mr. Mordaunt, men cannot fairly be ſaid to be deprived of the freedom of ſpeaking, or of writing, becauſe they are prohibited from ſpeaking ſeditiouſly, from publiſhing ſeditious books, or from forming themſelves into ſeditious clubs.

Mr.

Mr. MORDAUNT. Sir, the words SEDITION and SEDITIOUS are very vague words, and of very indeterminate meaning. There can be nothing that deſerves the name of liberty in any country, in which every kind of ſpeaking or of writing is prohibited, that will be termed ſeditious by placemen, penſioners, courtiers, and crown lawyers. And every ſociety which can be inſtituted, though on the pureſt and beſt principles, in which political queſtions are diſcuſſed, and in which a juſt attention is excited to the general rights of the community, will be termed by ſuch men ſeditious. If LOCKE on Government, or SYDNEY on Government, were new treatiſes, no doubt can be entertained, but that many of the modern aſſociators would conſider them as ſeditious publications, and proper ſubjects for proſecution. Some of the aſſociators alſo profeſs themſelves to be united,

united, not only for the ſuppreſſion of ſeditious publications, but for the ſuppreſſion of ſeditious opinions. But in a country, profeſſedly free, are opinions to be combated, not by reaſon and argument, but by force and violence?

Mr. GRANTLEY. I admit, that too great reſtraints ought not to be laid either on ſpeaking or writing. But can it be wrong to put a ſtop to the publication of ſuch books, as tend to ſubvert all order and government, and to throw the nation into a ſtate of anarchy and confuſion?

Mr. MORDAUNT. I know not, that any ſuch books have been lately publiſhed; but whatever may have been publiſhed, the law, or what is called the law, reſpecting libels, and the powers veſted in the crown and the crown officers, are more than ſufficient for proſecuting and puniſhing, with great rigour, all who can with the leaſt

ſhadow

ſhadow of reaſon be denominated libellers. There could be no poſſible occaſion, therefore, for voluntary aſſociations for this purpoſe, or for any new methods of reſtraining the freedom of ſpeaking or of writing.

Mr. GRANTLEY. Sir, it was the opinion of ſome of my friends and neighbours, in which I concurred, that at the preſent period it might be uſeful to ſtrengthen the hands of government, and to do what we could towards ſupporting the preſent conſtitution, and the eſtabliſhed laws; by which we ſuppoſed we ſhould alſo take the beſt method of ſecuring our own property.

Mr. MORDAUNT. It is paying a bad compliment to the government, and to the adminiſtration, to ſuppoſe, that voluntary aſſociations are neceſſary to procure obedience to the laws, and the ſecurity of property.

perty. The executive government of this country is veſted with ſufficient powers, for all the real purpoſes for which government is inſtituted; and if men do not find their perſons, or their property, in a ſtate of ſecurity, it is not from any want of authority in government. I muſt alſo obſerve, that the idea of ſecuring property, by an indiſcriminate ſupport of adminiſtration, is not founded on reaſon, nor countenanced by the evidence of hiſtory. In the reign of Charles I. many men of large fortune joined the king, probably under the idea of ſecuring their property, and of putting a ſpeedy termination to popular commotions. But the part they took, in the courſe of the civil war, deprived them of that property, for the preſervation of which they had been ſo anxious. Had they, on the contrary, oppoſed, in a regular and legal manner, the arbitrary proceedings

ceedings of the king, he muſt have ſubmitted, their property would have been ſecured, and no civil war would have taken place. If any adminiſtration be encouraged, by the ſervility and timidity of perſons of property, to engage in obnoxious meaſures of government, the property of theſe men may often be endangered, by the very means which they take to ſecure it. The wiſeſt mode of defending the conſtitution, and ſecuring property, is for men of fortune to oppoſe, in a legal and conſtitutional manner, all oppreſſive, unjuſt, and impolitic meaſures of government, and thereby compelling the perſons in office to reſtrain the exertions of prerogative within proper bounds. A reaſonable, moderate, and equitable adminiſtration, and paying a juſt attention to the real grievances of the people, is the beſt

method

method of preſerving the conſtitution, and maintaining national tranquillity.

Mr. GRANTLEY. I believe, Sir, that your obſervations are juſt. You have attended to theſe ſubjects much more accurately than I have done. But I have been aſſured, and ſo have ſome of my brother aſſociators, by men whom we ſuppoſed to be very reſpectable, that the conſtitution was in great danger; that conſpiracies were formed againſt it; and that it was neceſſary, that all real friends to the conſtitution ſhould unite in its ſupport.

Mr. MORDAUNT. How can you poſſibly ſuppoſe, my good friend, that any real conſpiracy of this kind can have been formed, when, though it is now ſo long ſince this report was given out, not a ſingle perſon has been taken up, even on ſuſpicion of ſuch a plot? The late attorney-general, I am told, condeſcended to go to the

the ſeſſions at Clerkenwell, to plead againſt a poor bill-ſticker. Can any man in his ſenſes then believe, that, if any ſuch conſpiracy had really exiſted, the vigilance of government would not have diſcovered one man, whom they might have had ſome plauſible pretence for apprehending?

Mr. Grantley. Indeed, Sir, it is not very probable. I muſt acknowledge, that the evidence of the plots has been kept a moſt profound ſecret. But you muſt admit, that libels upon the conſtitution have been circulated about, and other publications, calculated to give the people an ill opinion of government.

Mr. Mordaunt. It has always been ſuppoſed in my time, Mr. Grantley, till very lately, by all judicious men, that the people of this country derived the moſt ſignal advantages from the freedom of the preſs; and that it was highly beneficial to the com-

munity, that the conduct of the perſons in adminiſtration ſhould be publicly inveſtigated. And as to the apprehenſions of the dangers that may ariſe from what is called libelling the conſtitution, theſe appear to me to be the idle terrors of men, who are ignorant even of the firſt principles of civil government. If the conſtitution be good, it will bear the fulleſt and the freeſt inveſtigation. Indeed, the greateſt libellers of the conſtitution are many of the aſſociators; they who ſuppoſe, that it will not ſtand the teſt of examination, and that it cannot be ſupported, but by ſuppreſſing the freedom of ſpeaking and of writing. We are ſometimes told, that our conſtitution of government is the beſt in the world; and we are likewiſe told, that we have, beſides, a very excellent adminiſtration. If this be the caſe, is it poſſible, that either the conſtitution, or the government, can

be

be in any real danger from the publication of a few pamphlets?

Mr. GRANTLEY. The danger cannot probably be great: but it is ſaid, that there are many republicans in the kingdom.

Mr. MORDAUNT. I have not heard even of one republican club in this country, or of any body of men whatever, who have aſſociated for the purpoſe of eſtabliſhing a republic. But there may certainly be ſpeculative men in the kingdom, who conceive, that a republic would be better than a limited monarchy. It is no crime for any man to entertain that opinion, if he be guilty of no illegal act in order to ſupport it. There have always been ſuch ſpeculative men in this country, and there ever will be ſuch men in it, till we are become a nation of ſlaves. What the number of republicans may be in the kingdom, I will not take upon me to de-

termine; but this I will venture to aſſert, that the preſent meaſures of adminiſtration are not calculated eventually to leſſen their number.

Mr. GRANTLEY. It is certain, that there are ſundry ſocieties in the kingdom, the Revolution ſociety, the ſociety for Conſtitutional Information, and others, who frequently publiſh votes, and ſometimes diſperſe publications, that give great offence to government, and to many who are conſidered as moderate men; and I have heard the deſigns of theſe ſocieties ſpoken of as very pernicious. Indeed, it is underſtood, that men in power, who may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to have good information, entertained very ſerious apprehenſions reſpecting the miſchiefs which theſe ſocieties might probably produce.

Mr. MORDAUNT. Unprincipled courtiers and placemen, who fatten on the plunder

of

of the public, are always alarmed at the leaſt approaches towards a national reform. A clamour, therefore, has been artfully raiſed, which has terrified the timid, and deceived the ignorant and unſuſpecting. The prime object of moſt of the ſocieties of which you ſpeak, was to excite the attention of the people to the neceſſity of a parliamentary reform; and their deſigns were unqueſtionably laudable. Theſe ſocieties were not always thought of ſo unfavourably as they are at preſent; nor were they regarded as dangerous. I have ſeen the preſent duke of Richmond, both at the Revolution ſociety, and at the ſociety for Conſtitutional Information; he then appeared to enter fully into their views; and, ſo far as I can judge, their deſigns are as upright now as at that period. The late Sir William Jones, who was eminently diſtinguiſhed for his learning, his abilities, and his integrity, was alſo one

of the members of the ſociety for Conſtitutional Information, and ſometimes wrote odes for the uſe of that Society; one of which was ſet to muſic, and performed at a public dinner of the ſociety. But, at that time, it was not thought a diſcredit to any man to be a friend to the rights of the people; and the duke of Richmond was not then maſter of the ordnance.

Mr. GRANTLEY. I believe, however, Mr. Mordaunt, that when the duke of Richmond was a member of thoſe ſocieties, they did not carry on any correſpondence with the French nation.

Mr. MORDAUNT. They did not, Sir. The French Revolution had not then taken place; and there was no reaſon or opportunity for ſuch a correſpondence. But the intercourſe of theſe ſocieties with the people of France has been no diſcredit to them; the correſpondencies of theſe ſocieties

cieties have been groſsly and ſhamefully miſrepreſented; and they have only been employed as an abſurd pretext to deceive and to inflame the nation. Theſe correſpondencies were founded on principles of general philanthropy; and not the leaſt evidence has been produced of their originating in motives of any other kind. The members of theſe ſocieties remembered with the apoſtle, that God had "made of "one blood all nations of men for to "dwell on all the face of the earth;" and they wiſhed, that the bleſſings of liberty might be extended to all mankind. They certainly differed materially in opinion from many of the aſſociators, who are ſo far from wiſhing that liberty may be extended to other nations, that they ſeem extremely deſirous, that it may be wholly extinguiſhed in their own country.

Mr. GRANTLEY. I am convinced, that many have engaged in theſe aſſociations chiefly from an anxiety for the ſecurity of their property, without much attention to any other conſiderations.

Mr. MORDAUNT. Of this I have no doubt: but the anxiety of men for their property ſhould not make them regardleſs of their duties, or their rights, as Engliſhmen. The man who is anxious for his property, and regardleſs of his liberty, ſcarcely deſerves even to breathe the air of a free country. But with reſpect to attacks on property, I know that property has been ſhamefully violated, and the lives of very reſpectable men endangered, at Birmingham, and Mancheſter, and other places; but I know, at the ſame time, that the actors in theſe riots, and the inſtigators of them, theſe violators of the ſecurity of perſons and of property, were not thoſe who

are called republicans and levellers, but men who profeſſed a very ardent zeal for the church and for the king; and every man knows, that theſe loyal rioters have not been proſecuted by the government with too much ſeverity. I have heard of no riots in any part of England, by Republicans and Levellers. All the rioters, who have lately made any diſtinguiſhed figure, were Church and King men.

Mr. GRANTLEY. One idea which has prevailed, and which has contributed to enflame the minds of ſome perſons, is, that pains had been taken to propagate among the common people the doctrine of EQUALITY; or, that all perſons ſhould be rendered equal in point of fortune, or property; a doctrine, which would certainly lead to great confuſion, and to very ſerious evils.

Mr. MOR-

Mr. MORDAUNT. The doctrine of an equality of property has not been propagated by any of the ſocieties of the friends of liberty in Great Britain. It has not been propagated by the Revolution ſociety, by the ſociety for Conſtitutional Information, or by any of the ſocieties for parliamentary reform, or by any ſociety of the friends of freedom, of which I have ever heard. It is equally certain, that it is neither advanced nor recommended in the writings of Mr. Paine. If the doctrine has been at all diſſeminated among the people, it has been by thoſe truly libellous publications, which have been iſſued by the pretended aſſociators againſt republicans and levellers. In order to calumniate the real friends of freedom, they have undertaken to refute a doctrine which no man advanced; and thereby may have communicated ſome ideas of an equality of property

perty to the loweſt of the vulgar, which may at ſome time be productive of miſchief. But it has been juſtly obſerved by the preſent biſhop of Landaff, that "if any "perſons have been ſo ſimple as to ſuppoſe, "that even the French ever intended by "the term EQUALITY, an equality of "property, they have been quite miſtaken "in their ideas." This learned prelate alſo adds, that "the French never under-"ſtood by it, any thing materially dif-"ferent from what we and our anceſtors "have been in full poſſeſſion of for many "ages." This is probably ſpeaking too ſtrongly; but the French certainly meant an equality of rights, and not an equality of property. The ideas of the popular ſocieties in England concerning equality are perfectly conformable to thoſe of the duke of Richmond, who ſays, in his letter to lieutenant-colonel Sharman, "The

"equal

"equal rights of men to ſecurity from "oppreſſion, and to the enjoyment of life "and liberty, ſtrikes me as perfectly com- "patible with their unequal ſhares of in- "duſtry, labour, and genius, which are "the origin of inequality of fortunes." Nor do any of the popular ſocieties carry their ideas of the importance, or extent, of parliamentary reform, farther than that nobleman. He ſays, in the ſame letter: "The ſubject of a parliamentary reform is "that which of all others, in my opinion, "moſt deſerves the attention of the "public;—and, from every day's expe- "rience to the preſent hour, I am more "and more convinced, that the reſtoring "the right of voting univerſally to every "man, not incapacitated by nature for "want of reaſon, or by law for the com- "miſſion of crimes, together with annual "elections, is the only reform that can be

"effectual

" effectual and permanent." The ſame noble writer likewiſe ſays in that letter, after ſtating that no effectual reform was to be expected from the houſe of commons themſelves, " It is from the people at " large that I expect any good."

Mr. GRANTLEY. Beſides the particular doctrine of equality, I have heard much ſaid concerning the diligence, with which French principles in general have been propagated in this country, as well as in others; and the danger of the contagion of thoſe principles has been ſtrongly urged.

Mr. MORDAUNT. But what are theſe French principles, concerning which ſo much alarm has been ſpread? Before we join in abuſing French principles, theſe principles ſhould be more diſtinctly ſpecified. What are called French principles appear manifeſtly to have had their origin in England; and to be the ſame which have

have been advanced by ſome of the beſt and ableſt of the Engliſh writers. The French nation has maintained, that "All men are born, and remain, free and equal in rights; that ſocial diſtinctions cannot be founded but on common utility; that the end of all political diſtinctions is the preſervation of the natural and impreſcriptible rights of man; that theſe rights are liberty, property, ſecurity, and reſiſtance againſt oppreſſion; that the principle of ſovereignty reſides eſſentially in the nation, or people at large; and that no body of men, nor any individual, can exerciſe an authority that does not emanate expreſsly from that ſource." Theſe are the principles, which appear to have given ſo much offence to the German deſpots; but in what reſpect do they differ from the principles of SYDNEY and of LOCKE? SYDNEY has proved, that "all juſt magiſtratical power

is

is from the people; and that liberty is the right of all mankind:" and LOCKE maintains, that "all legitimate government is derived from the conſent of the people; that men are naturally equal, and that no one has a right to injure another in his life, health, liberty, or poſſeſſions; that no man in civil ſociety ought to be ſubject to the arbitrary will of others, but only to known and eſtabliſhed laws, made by general conſent for the common benefit; that no taxes are to be levied on the people, without the conſent of the majority, given by themſelves, or by their deputies; that kings and princes, magiſtrates and rulers of every claſs, have no juſt authority but what is delegated to them by the people; and which, when not employed for their benefit, the people have always a right to reſume, in whatever hands it may be placed." The French principles have been aſſigned as a reaſon

for

for engaging in a war with France; but are we to carry on a war againſt France, to eradicate ſuch principles as theſe, to eradicate the principles of SYDNEY and of LOCKE? Of all the nations of the earth, are the people of England to be ſelected, to engage in a cruſade, to prevent the propagation of the principles of liberty?

Mr. GRANTLEY. Whatever the principles may be, which have been propagated in France, it cannot be queſtioned, but that many acts of violence and cruelty have been perpetrated in that country ſince the revolution.

Mr. MORDAUNT. As to the acts of cruelty, violence, or injuſtice, which may have been committed in France ſince the revolution, that ſome ſuch ſcenes ſhould have taken place can be a ſubject of ſurpriſe to no man, who has any knowledge of human nature, or acquaintance with the hiſtory of the world. It could not be expected,

expected, that ſo enormous a ſyſtem of civil and eccleſiaſtical tyranny, as that of which the old government was compoſed, could be ſo completely overturned, without very violent convulſions. It muſt alſo be remembered, that the formation and eſtabliſhment of a new ſyſtem of government, ſo as to give complete ſatisfaction to twenty-five millions of people, muſt be a work of extreme difficulty. And even the beſt and the wiſeſt men, engaged in ſo arduous a work, would often find their efforts embarraſſed, or fruſtrated, by the intrigues, ambition, or perverſity, of ſuch evil-minded or abſurd men, as are to be found in every country under heaven. It will undoubtedly be a very deſirable thing to ſee tranquillity eſtabliſhed in France; but the German deſpots, who entered that country with their numerous and mercenary armies, had certainly no deſign

to communicate to the French nation a happy mixture of liberty and law; nor was the tyrannical, inſolent, and ſavage manifeſto of the duke of Brunſwick, well adapted to that end.

Mr. GRANTLEY. But what, Mr. Mordaunt, have you to ſay, with reſpect to the manner in which the French put their late king to death, who was certainly not one of the worſt princes of the Bourbon race?

Mr. MORDAUNT. Whether Louis XVI. the late king of France, was put to death juſtly, or unjuſtly, is a matter in which the people of England have very little concern, and which can undoubtedly afford no proper ground for any war with the French nation. This is admitted even by Mr. Pitt himſelf. When Charles I. was executed before the front of his own palace, France did not go to war with England on that account, though Charles's queen

queen was a French princeſs. No nation can ever have a right to dictate to other nations, what ſhall be their mode of government, or what their conduct to their princes. This appears to me to be unqueſtionable, and to be a part of the law of nations; though it may poſſibly be diſputed by Mr. Burke. For, before the execution of Louis, that gentleman declared, that "he thought the king of France to "be as much an object both of policy and "of compaſſion as the grand ſeignior, "or his ſtates." And, perhaps, if the Turkiſh nation had taken it into their heads to depoſe, or behead the grand ſeignior, and to aboliſh the excellent ſyſtem of government which prevails in Turkey, Mr. Burke might have thought it a juſt ſubject of very pathetic lamentation; and might have been of opinion, that it was a proper thing to ſend an Engliſh fleet and

army to Conſtantinople, to correct the ſeditious ideas which the Turks began to adopt, and to lead them to a due ſubmiſſion to their lawful and eſtabliſhed government.

Mr. GRANTLEY. Mr. Burke's ideas of kings, and of courts, were not, I think, always ſo reverential as they are at preſent.

Mr. MORDAUNT. By no means. He formerly ſpoke of kings as naturally lovers of low company, which was not placing them in a light the moſt reſpectable; and, in 1780, he told the citizens of Briſtol, that it was at that time "the plan of the "court to make its ſervants (that is, the "miniſtry) inſignificant;" though he obſerved, that "among the frolics of the "court, it might at length take that of "attending to its buſineſs." He alſo told them, that if the people choſe their repreſentatives on the ſame principles with

which

which the court choſe its miniſters, there would be no hopes of ſafety for the ſtate. "If the people," ſaid he, "ſhould chooſe "their ſervants on the ſame principles of "mere obſequiouſneſs, and flexibility, and "total vacancy or indifference of opinion "in all public matters, then no part of "the ſtate will be found; and it will be "in vain to think of ſaving it."

Mr. GRANTLEY. Theſe compliments to the court were certainly not of the moſt flattering kind; but, to leave Mr. Burke, I have met with ſome perſons who conſider the conduct of the French in Germany, and in Flanders, as very indefenſible. Not content with eſtabliſhing a republic in their own country, they have endeavoured to propagate principles of government ſimilar to their own in the dominions of foreign princes.

Mr. MORDAUNT. But, my dear Sir, it muſt be remembered, that the countries into which the French entered, previouſly to the declaration of war againſt England and Holland, were the territories of princes who had entered France with fire and ſword; and that, in perfect conformity to the laws of war, they had an undoubted right to attack the dominions of theſe princes. The invaſion of France by the Auſtrians and Pruſſians was repugnant to every principle of juſtice and the law of nations; and, when the French had driven them out of their own dominions, they had an inconteſtable right, according to the rules of war, to enter the Auſtrian or Pruſſian dominions, and, if they could make themſelves maſters of them, or of any part of them, to treat the inhabitants as conquered enemies. But what has ſo much exaſperated the German deſpots has

has been, that the French, not content with defeating the princes by whom they have been attacked, have been ſolicitous to communicate liberty to their ſubjects. This is conſidered as an inexpiable crime; but it might be preſumed, that it would not have excited any great indignation in Engliſhmen.

Mr. GRANTLEY. It has been aſſerted, that the French have ſent over agents, in order to excite tumults and rebellion in Great Britain.

Mr. MORDAUNT. Yes, I know that it has been ſaid, in an advertiſement of one of the aſſociations, and I think the worſt and the moſt unconſtitutional of all the aſſociations, that "the emiſſaries of France "were very numerous, and active to "ſeduce the people of this country, and "to excite them to inſurrection." But, from the beſt information which I can

collect upon the ſubject, I am convinced, that this is a groundleſs aſſertion; and, indeed, not the leaſt evidence of the exiſtence of ſuch emiſſaries in this country has ever been produced.

Mr. GRANTLEY. It muſt be acknowledged, that theſe French agents have kept themſelves in a ſtate of great privacy; for I have never met with one of them myſelf, nor do I know of any man who has.

Mr. MORDAUNT. Whatever our ſentiments may be, concerning the late tranſactions in France, and the circumſtances attending the Revolution in that country, there cannot ſurely be any very good reaſon, why Engliſhmen ſhould diſcover ſo much alacrity, as many of the aſſociators ſeem to do, in ſurrendering up ſome of their moſt important rights. For the people of England to be forming aſſociations,

ciations, in every part of the kingdom, to deſtroy the freedom of the preſs, and freedom of ſpeech, appears to me to be very much like the inhabitants of a country confederating together, in order to enſlave themſelves: which is a thing ſomewhat new in the hiſtory of mankind.

Mr. Grantley. Though there may be improprieties in the declarations of ſome of the aſſociators, it cannot be ſuppoſed, that the generality of thoſe, who have joined in theſe aſſociations, have any deſign to deſtroy their own liberties.

Mr. Mordaunt. Whatever their intentions may be, many of their declarations are extremely hoſtile to the freedom of the preſs, and to freedom of ſpeech, and are ſuch as could never have been expected to appear in a free country. I have copied out ſome of the reſolutions of different bodies of aſſociators; and, among others,

I find

I find that the worthy inhabitants of Baſingſtoke, in Hampſhire, have reſolved, "That it is highly expedient, to caution "all inn-keepers and victuallers, not to "permit any ſeditious publications TO BE "READ, or DEBATED, in their reſpective "houſes." To a foreigner, who ſhould read this advertiſement, it would appear ſomewhat extraordinary, that, in England, which formerly was celebrated as a country diſtinguiſhed for its liberty, common publicans ſhould be inveſted with a power of dictating to their cuſtomers what books they ſhould read, and about what they ſhould debate, and be ſuppoſed proper perſons to determine what books were, or were not ſeditious. Dr. Sacheverell, biſhop Atterbury, the advocates of the houſe of Stuart, and the old Tories, would have been aſhamed of propoſing what is done by the modern aſſociators under a prince of the

the houſe of Brunſwick. The inhabitants of Market Drayton, in the county of Salop, ſay, "We will be vigilant in the detection, "and zealous in the proſecution, of all "ſuch perſons, as may attempt to alienate "the affections of the people from the "eſtabliſhed conſtitution, either by the "circulation of diſaffected publications, "ſeditious converſation, or any other "illegal means whatſoever." The honeſt aſſociators of Tring, in Hertfordſhire, declare, that they are warm friends to the liberty of the preſs, and to freedom of opinions; but they afterwards add, with admirable conſiſtency, "We will exert "ourſelves collectively, and individually, "to diſcover the authors, publiſhers, and "diſtributors, of ſeditious and inflammatory "writings." Can there be any thing like the liberty of the preſs in this country, if the inhabitants of every pariſh are to be formed

formed into committees of accuſation againſt libellers, or thoſe who may be termed ſuch by the tools of power? But the men of Tring alſo reſolved, that it ſhould be "forcibly recommended" to all inn-keepers, and victuallers, in that pariſh, not to permit any ſeditious and treaſonable language to be uttered, or any inflammatory writings to be read in their houſes. If any man in an inn, or tavern, were to read ſome of Mr. Burke's ſpeeches, or to uſe ſuch language, as the duke of Richmond and Mr. Pitt did formerly, about a reform in parliament, or Mr. Burke about kings and courts, would not ſuch reading, or ſuch language, be deemed ſeditious, or as tending to ſedition? And yet our laws have given no peculiar privilege to theſe gentlemen, to uſe language that is unlawful to other men; at leaſt, not out of parliament.

Mr. GRANTLEY.

Mr. GRANTLEY. I obſerve, that you repeatedly quote and refer to Mr. Burke; though I ſhould ſuppoſe that gentleman could hardly be one of your favourite authors.

Mr. MORDAUNT. Sir, I have been a diligent reader of the writings of Mr. Burke; though I am often puzzled, as his friends, as well as himſelf, muſt alſo be, to reconcile his old politics with his new. But, in his old ſpeeches and writings, a mixture frequently appeared of eloquence and reaſon; though in his oratorical and literary efforts, for ſome time paſt, the latter ingredient ſeems to have been almoſt wholly omitted. But, to return to the aſſociators. The inhabitants of St. Sepulchre's, London, have reſolved, "That it ſhould be earneſtly recommended to all perſons keeping inns, taverns, coffee and public houſes, within that pariſh, to diſcou-

"rage,

" rage, to the utmoſt of their power,
" every ſeditious meeting, club, or in-
" flammatory diſcourſe, at their reſpective
" houſes, tending to ſubvert the public
" peace." The worſhipful ſociety of inn-keepers, vintners, and victuallers of Briſtol, have alſo declared, not only that they will, to the utmoſt of their power, ſuppreſs any inflammatory writings, and uſe every endeavour to bring the authors to juſtice, but that they would " mutually agree to diſ-
" cloſe, and make known, any treaſonable
" or ſeditious expreſſions which might
" come to their knowledge, in order that
" the guilty perſons might receive due
" puniſhment." Similar declarations have been made in other places; but, Sir, at a time when Engliſhmen had the feelings of free men, no man of the leaſt ſpirit would have entered the houſe of a publican, who had ſigned ſuch a declaration, or engaged

engaged in ſuch an aſſociation. Not only landlords, but female publicans, are raiſed to the office of cenſors of clubs, ſuperintendants of the converſation of men, and regulators of the proper boundaries of political diſcuſſion. Some of the worthy aſſociators of the county of Suffolk have reſolved, that they "would point out "every publican within their reſpective "pariſhes, as unfit to retain a licence, "who did not exert him or HERSELF to "preſerve good order, and to prevent "meetings or clubs, in which ſeditious or "treaſonable ſubjects are agitated, being "held at his or HER houſe."

Mr. GRANTLEY. Truly, ſome of theſe things are too ridiculous. But, when men are in a great tremor, as was the caſe with many of my brother aſſociators, their conduct cannot be expected to be in perfect conformity with reaſon.

Mr. MOR-

Mr. MORDAUNT. If the ideas of many of theſe aſſociators were to prevail, a man would go to Spain or Portugal, or even to Turkey or Morocco, in order to enjoy the benefits of liberty, and the pleaſures of free converſation. At all events, a man, who loved liberty, would change much for the better, by going from London to Berlin; where, though an highly military and deſpotic government is eſtabliſhed, the people are not deprived of the freedom of converſation. It appears to me, that if any aſſociations are neceſſary in this country, the aſſociations wanted are, not aſſociations for the ſupport of prerogative, but for the maintenance of the rights of the people. The aſſociators, and thoſe who have acted in concert with them, have endeavoured to ſuppreſs all freedom of political diſcuſſion. It is well known, that a municipal magiſtrate has forcibly

ſuppreſſed

ſuppreſſed a ſociety, meeting for the purpoſe of political debate. But, in former times, ſuch conduct, in a magiſtrate in the ſame ſituation, would not have been endured. When alderman Harley was lord-mayor of London, any man poſſeſſed of that office would have paſſed his time in the metropolis very unpleaſantly, if he had attempted to ſuppreſs the various public debating ſocieties which then ſubſiſted. It was not then thought a crime for men, old or young, publickly to deliver their ſentiments concerning the balance of Europe; and, indeed, the criminality of political diſcuſſion, in the city of London, ſeems to be quite a new diſcovery.

Mr. GRANTLEY. Sir, there have been great changes in the minds of men, ſince the period to which you refer.

Mr. MORDAUNT. Yes, there have been great changes. We have ſeen corporations,

who uſed to go up to the throne with the language of free men, ſince approach it with language little better than that of ſlaves and ſycophants; and, among the novelties of the age, it is not one of the leaſt edifying, to ſee Mr. Alderman Wilkes at the head of an aſſociation for the ſuppreſſion of ſeditious libels. As to the aſſociators, ſome of them, under the pretence of ſupporting law and the conſtitution, have been guilty of acts of groſs and ſhameful oppreſſion. But the perſons, whom they have chiefly injured, have been men in narrow circumſtances, and who, having little property, were incapable of procuring the protection of the law; which, whatever may be ſaid of its excellency, and of that of our conſtitution, every man who has the leaſt knowledge of the world muſt be convinced, is not the ſame for the rich and for the poor. Some of the aſſociators

alſo

alſo encourage private and anonymous information, and conduct themſelves in ſuch a manner, that no man, who has any pretenſions to the character of a gentleman, or a man of honour, ought to be preſent at any ſuch aſſociations.

Mr. GRANTLEY. In the former part of our converſation, Mr. Mordaunt, you diſcovered much diſlike at our being engaged in a war with France: but you ſhould remember, that the French firſt declared war againſt England.

Mr. MORDAUNT. They certainly did. But were not the meaſures, adopted by the Britiſh miniſtry, naturally calculated to produce ſuch an event? How were the French to continue in a ſtate of peace with a nation, or an adminiſtration, who would not treat with their ambaſſador, or enter into any negociation with him; and by which he was ſent out of the kingdom

diſreſpectfully and precipitately? When M. Chauvelin was ordered to quit the kingdom in eight days, was not then war virtually declared by the court of England? I have never yet been able to learn, that, previouſly to the time when that miniſter was ordered to leave this country, the Britiſh nation had received either injury or inſult from the republic of France. As to the objection ſtarted againſt acknowledging M. Chauvelin as a miniſter, becauſe he did not receive his credentials from a king, but from a great nation, this is an objection ſuited only to the underſtandings of the lords of the bed-chamber, and the maids of honour. Men of ſenſe and ſpirit, not rendered ſervile by court connexions, muſt reject it with diſdain.

Mr. GRANTLEY. It was peremptorily aſſerted by the miniſters in parliament, that a ſtrict neutrality reſpecting France had been

been observed by the court of Great Britain.

Mr. MORDAUNT. It was ſo aſſerted; but when we examine into the facts, do we find that this neutrality was really adhered to? Was not the exportation of corn to France prohibited, though it was permitted to other countries? In the ſituation in which France was then known to be, was not this an act eminently hoſtile? And was not the Alien bill a clear violation of the Commercial treaty with France, though that treaty was manifeſtly and highly beneficial to this country?

Mr. GRANTLEY. Much has been ſaid concerning the attempt of the French to open the navigation of the Scheldt; and, as the Dutch are our allies, it has been thought, that this alone was a ſufficient ground for engaging in a war with France.

Mr. MORDAUNT. It could not poſſibly

be a proper ground of war, becauſe it was admitted, even by Mr. Pitt himſelf, that the States General of the United Provinces, who only could be aggrieved by opening the navigation of the Scheldt, had made no requiſition on this ſubject to the court of England. The opening of the Scheldt was in no reſpect likely to be injurious to Great Britain. On the contrary, there was ſtrong reaſon to believe, that it would have been highly beneficial to our trade and manufactures. Was England then to be involved in a war with the French nation, becauſe they had "procured for a "people the uſe of a river that gave them "a free communication with the ocean, "and opened even to the Engliſh a more "direct mode of communication with the "Belgic provinces?"

Mr. GRANTLEY. Well, Sir, but the war, whether with or without juſt reaſon, is

now

now commenced; and it has been ſaid, that "when once our country is engaged "in a war, all queſtions relating to the "neceſſity, or propriety, of entering upon "it, ought to be ſuſpended till its con-"cluſion."

Mr. MORDAUNT. I am, Sir, by no means of that opinion. If a nation has entered into a war unjuſtly, or with too much precipitation, they cannot be too ſolicitous to bring about its termination. Surely, the lives of human creatures are worthy of ſome attention, perhaps of as much attention as the reputation of miniſters of ſtate. Though a war be commenced, yet as the repreſentatives of the people have a right, ſo the people at large have alſo a right, to examine, whether there was ſufficient cauſe for the war, and whether proper meaſures were adopted by the miniſtry for its prevention? A nation

muſt be enſlaved indeed, who are not permitted to expreſs their deſires to be delivered from the calamities of war, if they believe, that the continuance of war will not promote either the intereſt, or the honour of their country.

Mr. GRANTLEY. It muſt at leaſt be admitted, that, by the conſtitution, declaring war, and making peace, are a part of the royal prerogative.

Mr. MORDAUNT. By the preſent conſtitution, whether properly or otherwiſe, the power of making war or peace is undoubtedly veſted in the king. But the prerogatives of the king were conferred on him for the benefit of the nation, and they are to be exerciſed for the advantage of the people, and not to their detriment; and they have always a right to inquire, whether the royal prerogatives are ſo exerciſed.

Mr. GRANTLEY.

Mr. GRANTLEY. But what could induce the miniſtry to engage in a war, or the parliament to concur in it, if there was any reaſon to believe, that it would be eventually injurious to the nation?

Mr. MORDAUNT. It is often difficult, Sir, to penetrate the real motives and deſigns of miniſters and courts. We muſt not ſuppoſe, that adminiſtration, or the parliament, have been induced to engage in any meaſures pernicious to the nation, by "that glaring and dazzling "influence at which the eyes of eagles "have blenched," to adopt the luxuriant language of Mr. Burke. But we may be permitted to aſk, whether it be a thing totally new, and abſolutely impoſſible, for the miniſtry, and even the parliament of England, to be engaged in meaſures unfavourable to the real intereſts of the people? Does not the American war afford demonſtrative

ſtrative evidence of the poſſibility of ſuch an event? What high language was aſſumed in parliament, early in the conteſt between Great Britain and the colonies? One of the miniſters, ſtanding in his place, in the houſe of commons, would not "deign to inquire where a Congreſs "of vagrants was to be found." What was the reſult? "I conceal," ſays Mr. Burke, "the ridiculous figure of parlia-"ment, hurling its thunders at the "gigantic rebellion of America; and "then, five days after, proſtrate at the "feet of thoſe aſſemblies we affected to "deſpiſe; begging them, by the interven-"tion of our miniſterial ſureties, to receive "our ſubmiſſion; and heartily promiſing "amendment." And, in another ſpeech, the ſame gentleman ſays, "We ſent "out a ſolemn embaſſy acroſs the Atlantic "ocean, to lay the crown, the peerage,

"the

" the commons of Great Britain, at the " feet of the American congreſs." Theſe things ſhew, that neither miniſters, nor parliaments, are infallible. And as to the war now entered into with France, I could have wiſhed, that the cauſes and reaſons of that war had been rendered more obvious to common and vulgar underſtandings. For however highly we may eſtimate the wiſdom of parliament, plain men, who are ſomewhat in the habit of exerciſing their underſtandings, will wiſh to know, for what reaſon they are to pay new and accumulated taxes; and will be led to inquire, whether our war with France be founded on juſtice, or policy; and whether the object of it be to eſtabliſh the claims of foreign deſpots, and to enforce the doctrines of tyranny?

Mr. GRANTLEY.

Mr. GRANTLEY. I confeſs, Sir, to ſpeak candidly, that however ready I might be to concur in the aſſociations, from the idea of ſecuring my own property, I could never very clearly diſcern the reaſons, or the neceſſity, for a war with France. Without, however, being fully convinced of the propriety of the meaſure, I attended to the arguments that were urged in its ſupport; and was willing to give as much credit as I could to the rectitude of the views of the miniſtry, and to the wiſdom of their adminiſtration.

Mr. MORDAUNT. Few things, I think, are more evident, than that a nation overwhelmed with debts and taxes, as Great Britain now is, ought to engage in no war but in a caſe of extreme neceſſity. Johnſon ſays, "As war is the laſt of remedies, "CUNCTA PRIUS TENTANDA, all lawful "expedients muſt be uſed to avoid it. As "war

" war is the extremity of evil, it is ſurely " the duty of thoſe, whoſe ſtation intruſts " them with the care of nations, to divert " it from their charge." It ſeems extraordinary, that a nation ſhould be ſo injured as to have occaſion to go to war, and yet no man be able to give a clear account of what the injury is. I know, from the moſt authentic information, that, before the war, the French were more deſirous of being at peace with the people of England, than with any other nation. They were ſo far from being inclined to treat the Engliſh injuriouſly, that, if any man in France were known to be an Engliſhman, he was treated with reſpect merely on that account. As the French nation were ſtruggling for their liberties, they expected no countenance or ſupport from the deſpots of Europe. But they naturally thought, that a brave and free nation, like that of

England,

England, who had often ardently contended for their own liberties, would view with eſteem and approbation another nation, exerting every nerve in the ſame noble cauſe; and they hoped, that this eſteem and approbation would not have been withdrawn, on account of thoſe irregularities of conduct in a part of the French nation, which could hardly excite much ſurprize, when the difficulties and peculiarity of their ſituation were juſtly and candidly conſidered. It ſhould alſo be remembered, that part of the irregular and indefenſible acts which have happened in France, may reaſonably be attributed to thoſe evil diſpoſitions in the lower order of the people, which are the natural reſult of a deſpotic government. When a regular ſyſtem of free government has been longer eſtabliſhed, when the people have been accuſtomed to the union of liberty and law, their

their conduct will become leſs cenſurable. A tyrannical form of government naturally produces cruelty of diſpoſition; and men muſt have been ſome time in the habit of enjoying freedom, before they can either experience or exhibit all its advantages. But as to the late aſſociations in England, I am apprehenſive, that they have contributed much more, than the people are aware, to the commencement of hoſtilities with France. If theſe aſſociations had a tendency to encourage the miniſtry to involve the nation in a war, to which before they might be too much inclined, but concerning which they might be irreſolute, from their doubts reſpecting the temper of the people, they may then juſtly be conſidered as very ſerious evils. For I know of nothing that is ſo likely to be fatal to the welfare and proſperity of this country, and to the ſecurity of the

preſent

preſent eſtabliſhment, as a war with the French nation.

Mr. GRANTLEY. It is certain, that war muſt greatly contribute to increaſe our taxes, and to leſſen our trade, and may eventually be productive of great national calamity.

Mr. MORDAUNT. Many men of large property ſeemed very ready to join in the aſſociations. But I do not think, that their conduct has at all contributed to increaſe the ſecurity, or the value of their property. As to thoſe perſons, whoſe property is chiefly lodged in the funds, they could hardly have adopted any meaſure more pernicious, than that of ſupporting any adminiſtration, which ſhould be inclined to involve the nation in an unneceſſary war. Such an event muſt have a natural tendency to lower the funds, though this may not be its immediate effect. The preſent critical

tical ſtate of Holland, and of other parts of Europe, may have occaſioned foreigners to depoſit large ſums in our funds, which would, for ſome time at leaſt, prevent that diminution in their value, which was otherwiſe to be expected. But the preſent ſtate of things cannot laſt long; and no men will probably be greater ſufferers by a war than the ſtock-holders.

Mr. GRANTLEY. There ſeems much reaſon in what you have advanced. I have myſelf conſiderable property in the funds; and, if I had before viewed the matter in this light, I ſhould not have been quite ſo ready to join in the aſſociations.

Mr. MORDAUNT. A war with a nation conſiſting of twenty-five millions of people, and that nation contending for its liberties, is certainly a buſineſs of a very ſerious nature; and, however it may terminate, it is a war in which no honour can be

obtained on the part of Great Britain. I feel for the honour, as well as for the intereſt of my country; and, therefore, it gives me deep concern, whenever I ſee it at once injured and diſgraced. What the conſequences may be of a war with France, no man can with certainty predict. But that great preſent evils muſt be the reſult, cannot be queſtioned with the leaſt appearance of reaſon. Superficial and uninformed men, little acquainted with the hiſtory of nations and of wars, may be much elated at a few advantages, which may be gained over the French at the commencement of a war; but theſe advantages, if they ſhould be obtained, may produce little effect with reſpect to the final termination of the war, and to the ſtate of things when a peace ſhall take place. Defeats of the French in Holland, or in Flanders, may not materially affect the French revolution; nor

can

can it with any degree of reaſon be expected, that the antient government will ever be reſtored. Such an event can, indeed, be wiſhed for by no man, who is not an enemy to the liberty of the human ſpecies; ſuch an event could be favourable only to the eſtabliſhment of deſpotiſm in Europe. I would aſk then, What honour will Great Britain derive from a junction with German deſpots; and whether the eradication of the principles of liberty will be a compenſation for the millions that will be expended, and for the lives that will be loſt? Are the blood and treaſure of England to be laviſhed in a war, from which the people of this country have not the moſt remote proſpect of the leaſt poſſible advantage? Whence are we to derive any compenſation for the increaſe of taxes, the loſs of trade, and the decay of our manufactures? What are the objects of the

preſent war, and what will probably be its termination? I would aſk farther, Will thoſe profuſe declarations of loyalty, which have been made by the aſſociators, either leſſen the public burthens, improve our conſtitution, or eventually promote national proſperity, and national tranquillity?

Mr. Grantley. Sir, upon duly conſidering all that you have ſaid, I am ſenſible, that I have entered into the aſſociation, in which I have engaged, without ſufficiently conſidering its nature, or its conſequences; and of the evils and dangers of the war, in which we are unhappily involved, I have now the fulleſt conviction.

Mr. Mordaunt. I am glad, Sir, that you are convinced you have been in the wrong; and I honour you for the candour of your acknowledgement. Many others will ſoon be convinced of their error. They will be inſtructed by reflection,

and

and by the progreſs of events. The people of this country have been under a temporary deluſion. But the deluſion cannot laſt long. The nation will recover, I hope, its antient energies. The people will remember, that the princes of the houſe of Stuart were expelled this country, and deſervedly expelled, becauſe Engliſhmen would not ſubmit to a tyrannical adminiſtration. They will remember, that the profeſſed object of the elevation of the princes of the houſe of Hanover to the throne of Great Britain, was, the confirmation and eſtabliſhment of the rights of the people: and, if they have any juſt ſenſe of what they owe to the honour of their country, to themſelves, and to their poſterity, they will reſolve to maintain, at whatever hazard, the FREEDOM OF CONVERSATION, the FREEDOM OF DEBATE, and the FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.

REMARKS

ON THE

CONDUCT, PRINCIPLES,

AND

PUBLICATIONS,

OF THE

ASSOCIATION

AT THE

CROWN and ANCHOR, in the STRAND,

FOR

PRESERVING LIBERTY AND PROPERTY

AGAINST

REPUBLICANS AND LEVELLERS.

PESSIME VEL NATURA VEL LEGIBUS COMPARATUM FORET, SI ARGUTA SERVITUS, LIBERTAS MUTA ESSET. MILTON.

[FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1793.]

REMARKS

ON THE

CONDUCT, PRINCIPLES,

AND

PUBLICATIONS,

OF THE

CROWN AND ANCHOR ASSOCIATION.

THE proceedings of every ſociety, avowedly formed and aſſembled for public purpoſes, are a juſt ſubject of public examination and inquiry. No apology, therefore, can be neceſſary, for making ſuch remarks as ſhall appear to be well founded, on the conduct, principles, and

and publications, of the Society meeting at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, in the Strand, under the title of "The Aſſocia-"tion for preſerving Liberty and Property, "againſt Republicans and Levellers."

THIS Society was eſtabliſhed in November, 1792; and, at a meeting held on the 20th of that month, John Reeves, Eſq; in the Chair, it was reſolved, that the perſons preſent ſhould "become a ſociety "for diſcouraging and ſuppreſſing ſeditious "publications." It was alſo reſolved, that the ſociety would "uſe its beſt endeavours "to explain thoſe topics of public diſ-"cuſſion, which had been perverted by "evil-deſigning men." On the 24th of the ſame month, they recommended, by public advertiſement, the eſtabliſhment of ſimilar ſocieties in other places; and they reſolved, that "the object of ſuch ſocieties "ſhould be, to CHECK THE CIRCULATION

"OF

" OF SEDITIOUS PUBLICATIONS OF ALL " KINDS, whether news-papers or pam- " phlets, or the invitations to club-meet- " ings, by diſcovering and bringing to " juſtice, not only the authors of them, " but thoſe who kept them in ſhops, or " hawked them in the ſtreets for ſale; or, " what was much worſe, were employed " in circulating them from houſe to houſe, " in any manner whatever." Other aſſo- ciations, eſtabliſhed on ſimilar principles to that of the Crown and Anchor Tavern, have accordingly been formed in various parts of the kingdom; and the country has been in conſequence diſgraced, by numerous combinations againſt the freedom of the preſs.

THE pretence for eſtabliſhing the Crown and Anchor Aſſociation, and ſimilar ſocie- ties and aſſociations, was, " the danger to " which the public peace and order were " expoſed,

"expoſed, by the CIRCULATION OF MIS-
"CHIEVOUS OPINIONS," and "ſentiments
"in direct oppoſition to the laws of the
"land;" and it was ſaid, that this circulation
was principally carried on "by the induſtry
"of clubs and ſocieties of various deno-
"minations, in many parts of the king-
"dom." It was farther ſaid, that "wicked
"men, by the means of clubs and aſſo-
"ciations, had been ſpreading, among the
"ſimple and ignorant, ſeditious opinions
"deſtructive of good government, and
"the happineſs of us all. Good men aſ-
"ſociated to counteract thoſe evil deſigns,
"to ſupport good government, and to
"continue to us our preſent happineſs[1]."
Who were the "wicked men" here intended, I will not undertake particularly

[1] Proceedings of the Aſſociation for preſerving Liberty and Property againſt Republicans and Levellers, No. I. p. 8.

to

to ſpecify; but the "good men," were evidently the members of the Crown and Anchor Aſſociation, and their followers *.

In a ſubſequent advertiſement, ſigned John Reeves, the Crown and Anchor Aſſociation declared, that they would "uſe "their beſt endeavours, in aid and ſupport "of the civil magiſtrates, to DISCOURAGE "AND COUNTERACT ALL SEDITIOUS PUB-"LICATIONS, and attempts to diſturb "the peace of the kingdom." They

* It deſerves to be remarked, that in the above advertiſement of theſe "good men," the Crown and Anchor aſſociaters, the advertiſement was ſtated to be ſigned, "by order of the Society, JOHN MOORE, Secretary." But it now appears, that in this buſineſs theſe good men were guilty of a groſs impoſition on the public. For it has been ſince proved, by evidence, in a committee of the houſe of commons, that no ſuch man as John Moore exiſted; and that this name, which was affixed to other advertiſements of the ſociety, was only falſely aſſumed, as a political expedient for the promotion of their righteous purpoſes.

added,

added, that "in doing this, and in making "the preſent declaration of their intention, "they hoped they ſhould induce others, "who had the ſame wiſh with themſelves, "to ſupport the good laws and conſtitution "of this kingdom, and the peace and "happineſs of ſociety, to make ſimilar "exertions in their reſpective neighbour-"hoods, for the like purpoſes."

The loyal aſſociations which were thus formed, in different parts of the kingdom, did not confine themſelves merely to the ſuppreſſion of ſeditious publications, or to attacks on the liberty of the preſs; but they alſo endeavoured to ſuppreſs the freedom of converſation, and forcibly to interrupt the meetings of all clubs or ſocieties, whoſe object was political diſcuſſion. They publiſhed reſolutions, in which they declared, that they would individually, and collectively, be vigilant in the detection,

and

and zealous in the proſecution, of all ſuch perſons as might attempt to alienate the affections of the people from the eſtabliſhed government, either by the circulation of diſaffected publications, or ſeditious converſation. Publicans were threatened to have their licences withdrawn, if they ſuffered any ſeditious clubs or meetings in their houſes, or permitted any ſeditious publications to be read, or debated, or any ſeditious converſation; and, being intimidated by theſe threats, the publicans themſelves made united declarations, that they would exert themſelves to ſuppreſs ſeditious writings, and to diſcloſe and make known ſeditious converſation.

Such aſſociations againſt the freedom of the preſs, and the freedom of ſpeech, never appeared before in this country, or in any other, in which the inhabitants had any pretenſions to public liberty. It is extraordinary

dinary that any attempts ſhould have been made to form ſuch aſſociations, and ſtill more extraordinary that ſuch attempts ſhould have ſucceeded. But the nation had been filled with alarms of plots and conſpiracies againſt the conſtitution, which never exiſted, and of which not the leaſt evidence could ever be produced. The moſt falſe and malignant repreſentations were likewiſe given of thoſe ſocieties, which had been eſtabliſhed for the purpoſe of promoting a parliamentary reform, or in any other manner advancing the real intereſts of public freedom.

ASSOCIATIONS of private individuals, inveſted with no legal authority, but combined together for the purpoſe of exhibiting informations, or inſtituting proſecutions, againſt their fellow-citizens, for what they may deem too great freedoms in ſpeaking, or in writing, are certainly very incon-

inconsistent with the genius of a free people. Associations of men, in order to secure their own rights, are not uncommon; but associations of men to deprive themselves of their liberties, or of any important part of them, may be considered as truly wonderful; and yet precisely of this nature were many of the associations which have lately taken place in this country.

The number of seditious publications which were circulated, was urged as the principal reason for these associations: but whatever political publications may have appeared, there could not possibly be any just reason for establishing any societies or associations of this kind. It is well known to every man, who has fully and impartially investigated the subject, that the powers possessed by the crown, and the crown officers, in the case of libels, are of

ſuch a nature, that they can require no additional ſtrength, if it be intended, that any thing like the freedom of the preſs ſhould be preſerved to the inhabitants of this country. It has, indeed, been pretended, that theſe aſſociations are not againſt the freedom of the preſs, but againſt its licentiouſneſs; and a ſimilar defence is made with reſpect to the attacks on freedom of converſation. But who were to point out the preciſe boundaries between liberty and licentiouſneſs, either in ſpeaking or in writing? Any man who ſhould ſtate reaſons for a parliamentary reform, and urge the neceſſity for it, might be conſidered, by many of the aſſociators, as employed in attempting to alienate the affections of the people from the eſtabliſhed conſtitution. Or if any man ſhould happen to diſapprove the meaſures of adminiſtration, and expreſs this diſapprobation either

by

by ſpeech, or by writing, this might be deemed ſeditious, and as tending to ſubvert the public peace. No man could, indeed, be convicted, without ſome legal proceſs; but if ſentiments adverſe to the great intereſts of liberty are propagated among all orders of the people, and if they are taught to conſider every publication as libellous, which arraigns or cenſures the proceedings of government, the moſt public-ſpirited and meritorious political writers may be convicted as libellers, without reaſon, and without juſtice. Thoſe who imagine, that no man can be convicted as a libeller, unleſs his publication be really criminal, muſt be little read in the State Trials, or in the hiſtory of proſecutions for libels. Whether a publication be, or be not a libel, is by no means a queſtion equally clear with whether an action be or be not a felony. The latter ſpecies of offence is

preciſely defined by the laws; whereas the former has been often a ſubject of contention, and of great doubt and uncertainty, among the ableſt and the acuteſt lawyers. In trials for libels, it is alſo well known, that the judges, being appointed by the crown, are not apt to be too partial to the freedom of the preſs. If proſecutions, therefore, for political publications are frequent; if committees of accuſation againſt libellers, or pretended libellers, are to be formed in every county, and in every diſtrict; and if thoſe men, who are likely to ſerve on juries, have become members of theſe aſſociations, or adopted their principles; it will be impoſſible, that any thing like the real freedom of the preſs can ſubſiſt in this country.

If erroneous opinions reſpecting the rights of men, or the proceedings of adminiſtration, or any particular modes of govern-

government, are propagated, the only proper method of preventing any ill effects, which may be ſuppoſed to reſult from ſuch opinions, is to prove that they are falſe, or ill-grounded, or abſurd. This will be more ſatisfactory, and more efficacious, than any proſecutions of libellers. Men may for a time be ſilenced, or a book may be prohibited, in conſequence of the information of an attorney-general, and the deciſion of a court of juſtice; but no argument can be refuted by any other means than by that of reaſoning. It is abſurd to ſuppoſe, that public liberty can ſubſiſt, where there is not freedom of ſpeech, and the freedom of the preſs. It has been imagined, that the late aſſociations were favourable to the ſecurity of property: but Gordon ſays, "The ſecurity of property, "and the freedom of ſpeech, always go "together; and in thoſe wretched coun-

" tries where a man cannot call his tongue
" his own, he can ſcarcely call any thing
" elſe his own. Whoever would over-
" throw the liberty of a nation, muſt
" begin by ſubduing the freedom of
" ſpeech; a thing terrible to public
" traitors."

MUCH has been ſaid concerning clubs and ſocieties in England, who were charged with having formed deſigns to ſubvert the conſtitution, and overturn the government. But neither the adminiſtration, nor their adherents, have been able to ſuſtain a ſingle proſecution againſt any of thoſe popular ſocieties in England, concerning which ſuch ſerious alarms were profeſſed to be entertained. With all the vigilance of the Crown and Anchor aſſociation, and of ſimilar aſſociations in the country, and with all the vigilance of the magiſtrates and officers of government,

it

it does not appear, that a ſingle ſociety or club in the kingdom has been diſcovered, whoſe object was the eſtabliſhment of a republic, or againſt whom any evidence could be produced, of any deſigns or attempts againſt the conſtitution, or the government.

THE ſocieties for a reform of parliament, and the other popular ſocieties, have conducted their proceedings in a very open and public manner. But it was recommended, that the buſineſs of the Crown and Anchor aſſociation, and other ſocieties on the ſame plan, ſhould be conducted by "ſmall committees;" the members being reminded, that theſe were "not open "ſocieties for TALK and DEBATE, but for "PRIVATE CONSULTATION and REAL BU-"SINESS[3]." This was certainly the beſt

[3] Proceedings of the Aſſociation for preſerving Liberty and Property, ut ſupra, p. 7.

mode of proceeding for a ſociety, which avowedly received anonymous information againſt private individuals; but how far receiving, and acting upon ſuch anonymous information, was conſiſtent with any principles of honour, I ſhall leave to the public at large to determine. The holy court of inquiſition, like the ſociety at the Crown and Anchor, alſo has recourſe to private and anonymous information; but it is alleged in juſtification of the latter, that though the gentlemen of this aſſociation did receive private and anonymous information, they always made a very prudent and diſcreet uſe of it; and there can be no doubt, but that the court of inquiſition would ſet up juſt the ſame kind of defence. The Crown and Anchor aſſociation ſeem, however, perfectly ſatisfied with their own conduct: for though veſted with no legal authority for the purpoſe,

purpoſe, they have voted, that in meeting avowedly to receive anonymous information againſt private individuals, "they "believe they have diſcharged the duty "of good citizens, as well as that of "perſons who have aſſociated for the "expreſs purpoſe of defending the laws "and conſtitution of their country."

Besides the ſuppreſſion, by proſecutions, of ſeditious publications in general, the Crown and Anchor aſſociation alſo propoſed particularly to diſcountenance ſuch newspapers, as might happen not to adopt the court creed, or that of their aſſociation. By the reſolution of a committee of this aſſociation, dated Dec. 4, 1792, and ſigned John Reeves, it was "earneſtly recom-"mended to all good ſubjects, whether "maſters of private families, or keepers "of inns, taverns, or coffee-houſes, to "diſcontinue and diſcourage the uſe and "circu-

" circulation of all diſloyal and ſeditious " news-papers[4]." This was introduced by an abſurd and unfounded tale about French emiſſaries, who were ſuppoſed to have corrupted ſome of the editors of news-papers. Whatever corruption there may have been of the editors of news-papers, that corruption has certainly proceeded from a quarter very different from that of republicans and levellers; and not the leaſt evidence has yet been produced even of the exiſtence of thoſe " French " emiſſaries," who are ſaid to " wiſh to " deſtroy our excellent conſtitution."

THOUGH the members of this aſſociation had a deep ſenſe of the evils that might ariſe, from ſeditious news-papers being read by the common people, they were yet of opinion, that they might derive benefit from an occaſional peruſal of ſome of the

[4] Ibid. N° I. p. 12.

loyal

loyal papers; and accordingly, in one of the publications of the ſociety, they are particularly recommended to attend to the ſtatements, in theſe papers, of the ſavings in the public-money, which have been made by the preſent miniſter, and which, if his pure and virtuous intentions had not been fruſtrated, by his being compelled to call out the militia, MIGHT have relieved the poor from ſome of their taxes [5].

THE Crown and Anchor aſſociation were not content with taking proper meaſures againſt authors, printers, and bookſellers, who might write, print, or ſell ſeditious libels, but they alſo publiſhed, on the 6th of December, 1792, a very ſolemn admonition to the news-carriers. They reſolved, "That a caution be hereby given "to all ſellers of news-papers, news-

[5] Crown and Anchor aſſociation publications, N° 7. p. 2.

"carriers,

" carriers, perſons delivering hand-bills
" for club-meetings, and the like, that if
" ſuch papers are ſeditious or treaſonable,
" THEY are alſo guilty, EQUALLY with the
" original publiſher, printer, or author;
" and that it becomes them SERIOUSLY TO
" CONSIDER what are the news-papers,
" papers of invitation to clubs and other
" meetings, which they ſell, carry, or
" diſtribute, and whether they are of a
" nature to bring upon them the penalties
" of the law."

IT might have been preſumed, that it would have occurred to the ſagacity of the members of the Crown and Anchor aſſociation, that if their ſtatement was juſt, the poor news-carriers muſt be in a very perilous ſituation. It is alſo evident, that their occupation muſt be very laborious, and require no inconſiderable degree of knowledge. A news-carrier cannot, any

more

more than any other man, be assured, that the papers he sells contain no libels, unless he has previously read them. It is also necessary, that he should be well skilled in the law of libels. He would likewise be subjected to the reproaches of such of his customers, as were not so well informed as the members of the Crown and Anchor association, for his delay in the delivery of his papers. For by the time that a newsman had perused the Morning Chronicle, and the Morning Post, and the Gazetteer, and the Diary, and the Times, and the World, and the Public Advertiser, and the Public Ledger, the day must of necessity be far advanced. In the evening also, not only his labours, but his studies, must again commence. He would then have, on some evenings in the week, to pass through the Star, and the St. James's Chronicle, and the London Evening, and

the

the London Chronicle, and Lloyd's Evening, and the General Evening, and various other papers. In ſhort, in order to comply properly with the directions of the Crown and Anchor aſſociation, and carry on his trade ſafely, a news-carrier would be reduced to the neceſſity of reading more than ſome of the biſhops. And, after all this labour, if he ſhould happen to overlook a ſeditious paragraph, or not perceive its pernicious tendency, he might ſtill be in danger. Very grave lawyers, well ſkilled in black-letter caſes, and of profound reading, have been extremely cautious of pronouncing haſtily in matter of libel. It appears, that Mr. Juſtice Buller, on the trial of the Dean of St. Aſaph for a libel, at Shrewſbury, in 1784, declined giving any opinion whether the dialogue, for the publication of which the dean was tried, and which was known to be written by

Sir

Sir William Jones, was, or was not a libel. "It was not for him," he ſaid, "a "ſingle judge, ſitting at Niſi Prius, to "ſay, whether the pamphlet was, or was "not a libel." But a news-man muſt determine immediately, whether the papers he is to ſell, contain libellous matter, or otherwiſe. Now to expect, that news-carriers in general ſhould be more learned in the law of libels than Mr. Juſtice Buller, and that they ſhould read more, in the ordinary courſe of their profeſſion, than ſome of the bench of biſhops, does not ſeem perfectly reaſonable.

THE Crown and Anchor aſſociation had reſolved, that they would "uſe their beſt "endeavours, in aid and ſupport of the "civil magiſtrates;" and accordingly, on the firſt of December, 1792, they reſolved, that the thanks of that ſociety ſhould be given to the lord-mayor of London,

London, " for his well-timed activity and " exertion in ſupport of the laws and con- " ſtitution." One ſignal ſervice, which had been performed by this magiſtrate, was, the ſuppreſſion of a ſociety of young men, who were accuſtomed to meet at a houſe in Cornhill for political diſcuſſion, and who had formed the wicked deſign of entering into a public debate concerning the balance of Europe. By the courage, magnanimity, and vigorous exertions of the lord-mayor, Sir James Sanderſon, aided by the public force of the city, this ſociety was, it ſeems, completely diſſolved. But there may poſſibly be ſome difference of opinion reſpecting the degree of applauſe, which this great magiſtrate might deſerve, for his new and important diſcovery, that public and political debate in the city of London is a crime, and for his conduct in conſequence of that diſcovery.

One

One reaſon aſſigned for the aſſociations was, "the preſervation of public tranquillity." But there is no reaſon to believe, that theſe aſſociations have in the leaſt contributed to the eſtabliſhment of public tranquillity. It does not appear, that any riot has been ſuppreſſed by the exertions of the aſſociators, or that any have been prevented by any previous meaſures that they have adopted. On the contrary, at ſome places they ſeem to have had a ſtrong tendency to produce riots. At Mancheſter, in particular, on the evening of the very day, on which the aſſociation there was formed, a riot took place in that town, and the actors in it were avowedly of the ſame principles with thoſe of the aſſociators. Beſides other acts of violence, the loyal rioters, ſhouting "Church and King," made a violent attack on the houſe of Mr. Walker, and would probably have deſtroyed it, had it

not been for the vigorous defence made by that gentleman and his friends. Mr. Walker is a man of excellent character, very eſtimable for his perſonal qualities, and who had rendered great public ſervices to the town; but becauſe his political creed happened to be different from that of the aſſociators, the Church and King mob thought proper to evidence their loyalty, by attempting the demolition of his houſe. Mr. Walker's own firm and manly conduct prevented the greateſt part of the miſchief that was intended; but for his ſecurity he was not indebted to the aſſociators [6].

[6] Of the infamous practices afterwards entered into againſt Mr. Walker, by men pretending to aſſociate in ſupport of law and government, a copious and curious account may be found in the Trial of that gentleman, and others, publiſhed by himſelf; and alſo in his Review of ſome of the Political Events which occurred in Mancheſter, publiſhed in 1794.

As the Crown and Anchor aſſociation declared, in one of their advertiſements, that it was proper that ſocieties, like theirs, "ſhould by reaſoning, and by circulating "cheap books and papers, endeavour to "undeceive thoſe poor people, who have "been miſled by the infuſion of opinions, "dangerous to their own welfare, and "that of the ſtate;" they have accordingly publiſhed a variety of pieces, ſuch "as appeared to them moſt fit to counteract "the poiſon of ſeditious and inflammatory "writings;" and they have even opened a ſhop, near Temple-bar, for the expreſs purpoſe of ſelling theſe loyal publications.

What the tendency is of the publications, printed by order of the Crown and Anchor aſſociation, will beſt appear by an inſpection of them; and thoſe, by whom they ſhall be impartially examined, will ſoon diſcover, that the ſentiments which

they convey are often extremely hoſtile to the intereſts of public freedom. Indeed, if ſome of the doctrines, now diſſeminated among the common people by theſe publications, had formerly prevailed in this country, and been generally adopted, the Revolution could never have taken place, nor would the princes of the Houſe of Hanover ever have been raiſed to the throne of Great-Britain. And if any miniſter were inclined to prepare the minds of the people for a deſpotic government, he could not eaſily employ better inſtruments, than men who would propagate among them ſuch ſentiments, as ſome of thoſe which are inculcated in the publications of the Crown and Anchor aſſociation [7].

ONE

[7] The Chairman of the Crown and Anchor aſſociation, who appears to have been their moſt active member, and whoſe name often occurs in the advertiſe-

ONE great object of the publications of this aſſociation appears to be, to calumniate the friends of freedom. If the publication

vertiſements of the ſociety, was John Reeves, Eſq; chief juſtice of Newfoundland, ſteward of the duchy of Lancaſter, commiſſioner of bankruptcies, law clerk in lord Hawkeſbury's office, and treaſurer to the Weſtminſter police. This gentleman alſo appears to be the author of a pamphlet, publiſhed in 1795, under the title of "Thoughts on the Engliſh government. Addreſſed "to the Quiet Good Senſe of the People of "England." This pamphlet, among other paſſages of the moſt contemptible court ſervility, contains the following: "The Engliſh yield a willing obedience "to a government not of their own; it is an here-"ditary king, who bears all the burthen of govern-"ment, who is endued with all the power neceſſary "to carry it on, and who enjoys all the honour and "pre-eminence neceſſary to give ſplendour to ſo high "a ſtation. It is the KING'S PEACE, under which "we enjoy the freedom of our perſons and the ſecu-"rity of our property. He MAKES, and he EXE-"CUTES the laws, which contain the rules by which

lication of the moſt virulent abuſe againſt thoſe men, whoſe political ſentiments are different from their own, and the groſſeſt miſ-

" that peace is kept; and for this purpoſe, all officers,
" civil and military, derive their authority from him.
" Still farther to ſtrengthen this all-powerful ſway,
" two qualities are added that ſeem to bring this
" royal ſovereignty, as far as mortal inſtitutions can
" be, ſtill nearer to the GOVERNMENT of HEAVEN.
" Firſt, this power is to have perpetual continuance:
" THE KING NEVER DIES. Secondly, ſuch un-
" bounded power ſhall be preſumed to be exerciſed
" with as eminent goodneſs; and it is accordingly
" held, that THE KING CAN DO NO WRONG;
" meaning, that his perſon is ſo ſacred, that wrong
" ſhall never be imputed to him."—" The govern-
" ment of England is a MONARCHY; the monarch
" is the antient ſtock from which have ſprung thoſe
" goodly branches of the legiſlature, the lords and
" commons, that at the ſame time give ornament to
" the tree, and afford ſhelter to thoſe who ſeek pro-
" tection under it. But theſe are ſtill only branches,
" and derive their origin and their nutriment from
" their

miſrepreſentation, be meritorious, to this ſpecies of merit the Crown and Anchor aſſociation have a juſt claim. In one of their

" their common parent; they may be lopped off, and " the tree is a tree ſtill; ſhorn indeed of its honours, " but not, like them, caſt into the fire. The " government may go on, in all its functions, without " lords or commons; it has hitherto done ſo for " years together, and in our time it does ſo during " every receſs of parliament; but without the king " HIS parliament is no more. The king, therefore, " alone it is who neceſſarily ſubſiſts, without change " or diminution; and from HIM alone we unceaſingly " derive the protection of law and government."

Such were the ſentiments propagated by the chairman of the Crown and Anchor aſſociation; and ſimilar ſentiments repeatedly occurred in the publications of that aſſociation. On the 11th of December, 1795, the Houſe of Commons reſolved, that the pamphlet, entitled, " Thoughts on the Engliſh Government," &c. is a " malicious, ſcandalous, and ſeditious libel, " containing matter tending to create jealouſies and " diviſions among his majeſty's loyal ſubjects; to ali-

their publications it is ſaid, that "the "perſons who compoſe the ſocieties for "CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMATION are "men

"enate their affections from our preſent happy form "of government, as eſtabliſhed in king, lords, and "commons; and to ſubvert the true principles of "our free conſtitution; and that the ſaid pamphlet "is a high breach of the privileges of this houſe." On the 15th of the ſame month, the houſe alſo reſolved, "That an humble addreſs be preſented to "his majeſty, humbly to deſire his majeſty, that he will "be graciouſly pleaſed to give directions to his attorney-"general to proſecute John Reeves, Eſq; as the author "or publiſher of a printed pamphlet, entitled, Thoughts "on the Engliſh Government, addreſſed to the Quiet "Good Senſe of the people of England."

Beſides the paſſages already quoted from this pamphlet, others equally curious are to be found in it. Mr. Reeves expreſſes his diſlike to Revolution ſentiments, and Revolution celebrations; and has a great averſion to Conſtitutional lawyers. Of thoſe gentlemen, who have occaſionally met to celebrate the anniverſary of the Revolution, he ſays, "I wonder, conſidering "the

" men of weak heads, of bad hearts, or " deſperate fortunes." In another of theſe pieces it is aſſerted, that thoſe who aſſociate

" the rank and ſtation of ſome of theſe perſons, that " a ſenſe of good breeding and decorum has never " ſuggeſted to them, that ſo much commemoration " of that Revolution, repeatedly urged out of all " ſeaſon and meaſure, CANNOT SOUND AGREEABLY " IN THE EARS OF THE SOVEREIGN." Among the political writers, to whoſe works he has a particular averſion, one is, George Buchanan; and it may be readily admitted, that Buchanan is a political writer of a very different claſs from Mr. Reeves.

He thinks it a very happy circumſtance for the church of England, that, at the Reformation, " ſhe " was UNITED WITH THE INTERESTS OF THE " CROWN, in ſuch a manner as to claim the full " ſupport of the civil power, if aſſailed by enemies." He ſays, that, at that period, " occaſion was taken " to put an end to the long-conteſted claim of the " pope, to exerciſe eccleſiaſtical dominion over the " king's ſubjects in this kingdom. The whole of " that uſurped juriſdiction was expreſsly and com-

" pletely

aſſociate to increaſe the liberties of the people, " ſeek, by means which they " know to be the high road to confuſion, " to

" pletely taken away by act of parliament; and that " juriſdiction, firſt under the name of Headſhip, and " then of Supremacy in all eccleſiaſtical matters, " was placed by the ſame authority in the king. THE " CHURCH WAS THUS FAST BOUND TO THE MO- " NARCHY; and this union of all authority, eccle- " ſiaſtical as well as civil, in the CROWN, it was " hoped, beſides placing religion out of danger, would " make A COMMON CAUSE BETWEEN CHURCH AND " STATE."

Mr. Reeves has a great averſion to Calvin, and the Calviniſts; but he ſometimes thinks proper himſelf to make uſe of Calviniſtic language. Thus, ſpeaking of Republicans, he ſays, that being " delivered over to a " ſtate of reprobation, they act as totally bereaved of " ſaving and preventive grace." He complains, that there are ſome Engliſhmen ſo perverſe, that they are not inclined to " repoſe themſelves confidently on " the government of the king." He has, however, a good opinion of his countrymen in general. " I " am

" to ſeize what is not their right, at the
" expence of crimes ſimilar to thoſe which
" have deſtroyed one of the firſt kingdoms
" in

" am not," he ſays, " A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD,
" ſo as to divide my affection with ſtrangers. I am
" an Engliſhman; and I thank God for having
" placed me among a people, who, I think, poſſeſs
" more goodneſs of heart, and more good ſenſe, than
" any other in the world, and who are the happieſt,
" becauſe they make the beſt uſe of both."

It may excite ſurprize in ſome of his readers, that Mr. Reeves in one particular concurs exactly in opinion with Thomas Paine. He thinks, with him, that we have no Conſtitution. " The Government," he ſays, " we know, and the Laws we know, but the " Conſtitution we know not. It is an unknown " region, that has never been viſited but by dreamers, " and men who ſee viſions."

Mr. Reeves's pamphlet is " addreſſed to the QUIET " GOOD SENSE of the people of England;" but if they had formerly been characterized by that " quiet good " ſenſe," for which he ſo much commends them, Magna Charta would never have exiſted, nor would

the

" in the world." The friends of parliamentary reform, and of public liberty, are alſo called " wicked and ſenſeleſs re-" formers," and " ruffian levellers." Thoſe, who are ſuppoſed to be republicans, and thoſe who are advocates for a parliamentary reform, are all involved in the indiſcriminate abuſe of the Crown and Anchor

the Revolution ever have taken place. " Above all " things," he ſays, " an Engliſhman loves QUIET. " GIVE PEACE IN OUR TIME is the language of his " prayers, and the ſilent wiſh of his heart." If this be really the caſe, it ſeems ſomewhat wonderful, that the adminiſtration, under whoſe foſtering care Mr. Reeves has ſo much flouriſhed, and by whom his loyal ſervices have been ſo liberally rewarded, ſhould ever have become ſo popular. The members of that adminiſtration have certainly not been very zealous promoters of peace. It would be difficult to point out any adminiſtration, at any period, by whom war has been engaged in more impolitickly and unneceſſarily, and carried on with more obſtinacy, and with conſequences more diſgraceful and deſtructive to this country.

" aſſoci-

aſſociation [8]. The favourers of the French revolution in England are alſo ſpoken of, as men "who have ſold themſelves to be "the underlings of French fanaticiſm and "villainy [9];" and as "the inſtruments of "hell-born diſcord, who can never be "gratified but by univerſal bloodſhed and "ruin [10]."

In theſe publications principles are inculcated, which would have been much approved by king James the Firſt, and by the moſt bigotted of the old Tories and Jacobites. The people are taught, not to make a clamour about freedom, but to leave all the national cares to the great [11]. The doctrine, that all legitimate government originates from the people, is endeavoured to be exploded [12]; and we are

[8] Vid. Crown and Anchor aſſociation publications, Part I. No. 2. p. 9. [9] Ibid. No. V. p. 5.
[10] Ibid. p. 6. [11] Ibid. Part I. No. VI. p. 16.
[12] Ibid. No. I. p. 2.

told,

told, that " the antient crown of this " kingdom is worn with hereditary right [13]." An implicit faith in the adminiſtration is alſo recommended to the people. They are adviſed not to meddle with political diſcuſſions; but to " truſt to a good mi- " niſtry [14];" who will " take PARTICULAR " CARE, that the taxes ſhall be reduced, " as often as the circumſtances of the " times will admit [15]." They are alſo told of " the terrible conſequences of a country " being deprived of courtiers [16];" of the labours and dangers of miniſters of ſtate, and that they earn their ſalaries very dearly " by a laborious daily application to buſineſs [17];" and an important diſcovery is

[13] Publications printed by order of the Society for preſerving Liberty and Property, &c. Part II. No. III. p. 21.

[14] Ibid. Part I. No. 7. p. 3.

[15] Id. Ibid.

[16] Ibid. No. VIII. p. 7.

[17] Ibid. p. 6.

made,

made, that "courtiers are so many chan-
"nels through which the wealth of the
"country is poured upon the middling
"and lower orders of people"."

GREAT alarm has been excited throughout the nation about the writings of Mr. Paine; and accordingly Mr. Paine, and his writings, make a very principal figure in the publications of the Crown and Anchor association. But among all these publications not a single calm, dispassionate, argumentative answer to Mr. Paine's books, or refutation of his principles, is any where to be found. There is, however, much low and vulgar abuse of him; and answers to arguments and principles as his, which are not advanced in any of his writings. No good cause requires these arts, or this kind of management.

IT is said, in the publications of the

[15] Ibid. p. 7.

Crown

Crown and Anchor aſſociation, not only that the Britiſh conſtitution is "the ſource "of freedom, of felicity, and of glory, to "this country, and the envy of the reſt "of the world," but that it is "the "maſter-piece, to which all rational friends "of liberty, throughout the globe, look "up, as to a matchleſs model for imita-"tion." Now if all this be true, or if the half of it be true, ſuch a conſtitution would be able to reſiſt any attacks whatever. Such a conſtitution could not be overturned by all the attacks of THOMAS PAINE, or materially injured even by the vindications of EDMUND BURKE.

ONE of the evil and pernicious doctrines, reprobated in the publications of the Crown and Anchor aſſociation, is, that "the "houſe of commons does not contain an "adequate repreſentation of the people." But this doctrine has formerly been very ſtrenu-

ſtrenuouſly maintained by members of the preſent cabinet, particularly by Mr. Pitt and the duke of Richmond. The latter, in his letter to lieutenant-colonel Sharman, profeſſed himſelf to be ſolicitous, that the people ſhould "contend for their full, "clear, and indiſputable right of uni-"verſal repreſentation." He added, "I "know of no man, let him be ever ſo "poor, who, in his conſumption of food, "and uſe of raiment, does not pay taxes; "and I would wiſh to encourage an en-"thuſiaſm for his country in the breaſt of "every ſubject, by giving him his juſt "ſhare in its government." There is undoubtedly full as much occaſion now for a reform of parliament, as there was when its neceſſity was ſo ſtrongly urged by this nobleman, and by the preſent chancellor of the exchequer. Whatever change there may have been in their ſentiments,

or in their ſituations, the juſt claims of the people have ſuffered no alteration; and they have an inconteſtible right to aſſert them, with a zeal and an energy proportioned to their importance.

VERY admirable arguments are, however, employed in the publications of the Crown and Anchor aſſociation, and very curious ſtatements made, in order to convince the people, that there can be no occaſion for a reform of parliament, or for any oppoſition to the meaſures of adminiſtration. Every thing, it ſeems, is preciſely as it ought to be. The taxes of this country, the common people are informed, are levied in the beſt of all poſſible modes. "The taxes are laid in ſuch a manner, "that LITTLE IS PAID BY THE POOR, "and EVERY MAN IS AT LIBERTY TO "PAY WHAT HE PLEASES, by living in "that manner that will ſubject him to

the

" the fewer taxes [19]." They are alſo told, that they " are in poſſeſſion of every right " that is conſiſtent with ſafety to the life " and property of others [20]." Every thing in the laws, and in the adminiſtration of juſtice, is alſo perfectly right. Thus it is ſaid to the poor, " As long as you continue " honeſt, and do no injury to your neigh- " bour, the law permits you to do exactly " as you pleaſe, and it endeavours to make " every thing comfortable to you, and " ſeverely puniſhes all thoſe who dare to " diſturb you. You would find all this to be " true, IF YOU KNEW ALL THE PROCEED- " INGS OF THE COURTS OF LAW." They are likewiſe informed, that " every indivi- " dual in this country, who finds himſelf " aggrieved, may find his way to parlia-

[19] Crown and Anchor aſſociation publications, Part I. No. 7. p. 2.

[20] Ibid. Part I. No. VI. p. 7.

" ment, and is ſure of an advocate and a " friend." Should they not be ſimple enough to believe all this, (and they muſt be very ſimple if they do), they are then told, that if there are any deficiencies in the conſtitution, or errors in the government, they are " inevitable imperfec- " tions ariſing out of the general nature " of human affairs."

THAT there is great reaſon for a reform in the repreſentation of the people in the houſe of commons; that there are many defects in our laws, and in the mode of adminiſtering them, particularly with reſpect to the enormous expence attending law-ſuits; and many things, which might advantageouſly be altered in our executive government, can be doubted by no intelligent and impartial man. But ſuch aſſociations, as that at the Crown and Anchor, and the principles which they inculcate,

are

are calculated to lull the people into a ſtate of political inſenſibility, to ſupport antient abuſes, and to prevent thoſe improvements in the conſtitution, and in the adminiſtration of juſtice, which muſt be wiſhed for by every man, who has a ſincere attachment to the real intereſts of his country.

In the publications of this aſſociation, the revolution in France, and the tranſactions in that country, are miſrepreſented in the groſſeſt manner[21]; and much pains is taken to inſtil into the minds of the common people the moſt abſurd and illiberal prejudices againſt the French nation. But though we are at preſent unhappily involved in a war with France, it will not be the opinion of any equitable or impartial man, that ſuch miſrepreſentations are defenſible, or that there is any merit in

[21] Crown and Anchor Aſſociation Publications, Part I. No. VII. p. 9.

traducing the actions even of our enemies.

THROUGHOUT a conſiderable part of theſe publications, doctrines are attempted to be refuted, which no political ſociety in the kingdom has ever attempted to propagate. In particular, the ridiculous idea of an equality of property, which has never been advanced or eſpouſed in any of the popular ſocieties, which is not to be found in the writings of Mr. Paine, and which I never met with a ſingle individual in the kingdom who maintained, is perpetually introduced, in order to be combated, in the publications of this ſociety; and by them it ſeems to have been rendered more familiar to the common people than by any other means whatever. Thoſe who have paid the leaſt attention to the ſubject muſt know, that the EQUALITY, contended for by the friends of freedom, is an EQUALITY OF RIGHTS, and not an EQUALITY OF PROPERTY.

PROPERTY. Indeed, the only men in the kingdom, who ſeem to have adopted any ideas of an equality of property, were the late rioters at Birmingham. For it is ſaid to have been aſſigned by ſome of them, as a reaſon for demoliſhing the houſes of the Diſſenters in that town, that "the Diſſenters had better houſes than the Churchmen." But theſe "Ruffian Levellers," like thoſe of Mancheſter, were not Republicans, or Diſſenters, but Church and King men.

THE Crown and Anchor aſſociation have been deſirous of inſtructing his majeſty's good ſubjects, in the principles of loyalty, and an implicit faith in the wiſdom and rectitude of government, both in verſe and in proſe; and accordingly, beſides their excellent proſe pieces, a conſiderable variety of very delectable ballads has been publiſhed under their ſanction. But

whether their publications are in verſe, or in proſe, the ſame ſervile acquieſcence to men in power is inculcated, under the idea of maintaining and preſerving the conſtitution. We may, indeed, admit of theſe publications, to borrow a phraſe from one of them, that they are not "calculated to "produce much effect upon ſtrong, ex- "perienced, and well-informed minds;" but ſome of them are not ill adapted to impoſe on the weak and credulous, and to lead them to form ſuch ideas as may be conformable to the views of placemen, penſioners, and court paraſites.

Upon a due conſideration of the origin, the progreſs, and the conduct of the Crown and Anchor aſſociation, we may venture to aſſert, that it is a ſociety, which can deſerve no countenance or ſupport from any man, who is a ſincere and enlightened friend to the liberties of his country.

Under

Under the pretence of maintaining and preſerving the conſtitution, their conduct and publications are in direct oppoſition to its genuine principles. But it cannot be ſuppoſed that the deceptions, which have been employed to induce the people to concur in ſuch aſſociations, can much longer be practiſed with ſucceſs. The period is probably not far diſtant, when even the loweſt of the vulgar will diſcern, that depriving men of the freedom of the preſs, and of the freedom of ſpeech, is not maintaining liberty and the conſtitution. It was not by aſſociations in ſupport of the prerogative, or for extending its influence, that the rights of Engliſhmen were eſtabliſhed. It was not by an implicit faith in miniſters of ſtate, it was not by ſervility to courtiers or to kings, that England has been rendered reſpectable and diſtinguiſhed among the nations of Europe. It was by the

the prevalence of the principles of PUBLIC LIBERTY, that this country attained to its preſent greatneſs; and it is by an adherence to theſe principles only, that its ſplendour and its proſperity can be continued.

AN

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

LIFE, CHARACTER,

AND

WRITINGS,

OF

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1786.]

AN

ESSAY, &c.

THE attention of the public was never more excited, in consequence of the death of any man of literary celebrity, than by that of the late Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON. Innumerable anecdotes have been published of him, his most minute singularities have been recorded,

corded, and his virtues, and even his weaknesses, laboriously displayed, by those who lived with him on terms of the most perfect intimacy. It is not my design to give a regular or copious narration of the transactions of his life, or to communicate any new anecdotes of him: but as so much has been written and published concerning Dr. Johnson, there may probably be some, who may be desirous to form a rational estimate of his character and of his writings, who would judge impartially of his excellencies and his defects; and it is with a view to contribute in some degree to that end, that this Essay is now offered to the public.

It is scarcely possible for any man, who has the least taste for literary composition, to peruse the writings of Johnson, without a full conviction, that he possessed uncommon powers of mind; and uncom-

mon

mon energy of language. His perſonal character appears alſo to have been peculiar and extraordinary; and ſuch as muſt excite the attention of thoſe who are curious in their reſearches into human nature. As he attained to great eminence by his ſuperior talents as a writer, ſo as a man he was alſo diſtinguiſhed by his virtues. But as he had great excellencies, he had alſo great weaknefſes; and the latter appear ſometimes to have been nearly as conſpicuous as the former.

SOME of the friends of Dr. Johnſon have been led, by the warmth of their attachment to him, to eſtimate too highly his moral and religious character. When Mrs. Piozzi tells us, that Dr. Johnſon had a mind "good beyond all hope of "imitation from periſhable beings [*]," we can by no means aſſent to the truth of

[*] Anecdotes of the late Dr. Samuel Johnſon, p. 294.

the

the propoſition; and eſpecially when we find her relating weakneſſes of him, which would be thought diſgraceful even in very ordinary men. Mrs. Piozzi alſo ſpeaks of him, as "one of the moſt zealous and "pious Chriſtians our nation ever pro-"duced[2];" and in another place ſays of his life, that "it was a life of ſeventy "years ſpent in the uniform practice of "every moral excellence, and every Chriſ-"tian perfection, ſave humility alone.[3]"

Mr. Tyers obſerves, that "when Charles "the Second was informed of the death "of Cowley, he pronounced, That he had "not left a better man behind him in "England." This gentleman alſo adds, "It may be affirmed with truth, that this "was the caſe when Dr. Johnſon breathed "his laſt[4]." I feel no inclination to con-

[2] Ibid. p. 18. [3] Ibid. p. 220.

[4] Biographical Sketch of Dr. Johnſon, in the New Annual Regiſter for 1784, p. 23.

trovert

trovert any aſſertion made by Mr. Tyers; but caſes often occur, in which we cannot agree in opinion with thoſe whom we eſteem; and I am far from being convinced of the juſtneſs of this ſentiment reſpecting Dr. Johnſon. The aſſertion of King Charles II. concerning Cowley was not true; and as we refuſe our aſſent to the royal eulogium pronounced on that poet, we may alſo be permitted to queſtion the propriety of its application to Dr. Johnſon, and this without the leaſt deſire to do any injuſtice to his memory. In Johnſon, conſidered as a man, and as a writer, there was much that was excellent and laudable, and no inconſiderable portion of what was otherwiſe. In forming our ideas of his character, we muſt ſeparate the one from the other, if we would make a juſt and rational eſtimate.

THAT the aſſertion of King Charles reſpecting COWLEY was not well ground-

ed, perhaps a little attention to the characters of that age may be ſufficient to determine. That eminent poet appears to have been poſſeſſed of very amiable qualities: but at the time of his death the illuſtrious ROBERT BOYLE was living, who was as much diſtinguiſhed for his piety and virtue, as for his philoſophical abilities. In a moral and religious view, the character of Cowley could not be placed in competition with that of Boyle. It may likewiſe be obſerved, that among other men of eminent virtue of that age, Sir MATTHEW HALE was alſo yet living.

IT was very pardonable in Mr. Tyers, and the other zealous friends of Dr. Johnſon, to ſpeak ſomewhat too highly of his character. The warmth of attachment to the memory of a deceaſed friend, was a ſufficient apology for their conduct. But poſitions muſt not too haſtily be admitted,

which

which are not ſupported by fact, and which are not conſiſtent with a juſt regard to the honour of human nature. It ſeems alſo injurious to the intereſts of religion and virtue, to repreſent Dr. Johnſon as a pattern of human excellence. Better models might undoubtedly be pointed out. He had great virtues, but he had alſo too many ſtriking and apparent faults, to be conſidered as a proper object of indiſcriminate imitation. Highly as he thought of himſelf, his attachment to the intereſts of virtue was too ſincere to have ſuffered him to countenance ſuch an opinion. When, in his laſt illneſs, he ſaid to his ſurrounding friends, "Don't live ſuch a "life as I have done[s]" he had no idea of being conſidered as a man of exemplary piety and virtue. There have been many men, who were more uniformly pious,

[s] Tyers's Biographical Sketch, ut ſupra, p. 24.

and more uniformly benevolent, than Dr. Johnſon, and who had neither his arrogance, nor his bigotry; and ſuch men, in a moral and religious view, were ſuperior characters. There were ſuch men before the death of this celebrated writer, and there can be no reaſonable doubt but that ſuch men are yet remaining.

HAVING made theſe remarks, I think it here proper to obſerve, that I am totally devoid of the leaſt inclination to degrade injuriouſly the character of Dr. Johnſon; and that I only wiſh to ſee it equitably and accurately aſcertained, in ſuch a manner as ſhall do juſtice to his real excellencies, without injury to the intereſts either of virtue or of truth.

IN every part of Dr. Johnſon's life, he appears to have had a ſtrong ſenſe of the importance of piety and virtue; this was conſtantly exhibited in his writings, and

often

often in his actions; but his reproaches of himſelf for not regulating his conduct according to his principles were very frequent; and ſeem, on his fixed and ſtated days of religious recollection, to have been very pungent. When he was fifty-five, he ſays, that from almoſt the earlieſt time that he could remember, he had "been "forming ſchemes of a better life*." He was often ſtruggling with his own irregular propenſities; and his frequent bodily complaints had a conſiderable tendency to prevent him from employing his time in the manner that he wiſhed, and which his judgment and his conſcience dictated.

He appears to have been under the influence of ſtrong ſentiments of piety from an early period of life: but the firſt prayer

* Prayers and Meditations, compoſed by Dr. Johnſon, and publiſhed by Mr. Strahan, p. 52.

that

that he remembered to have compoſed, and which was publiſhed by Mr. Strahan, in the collection of his "Prayers and "Meditations," was written by him in 1738, when he was twenty-nine years of age [7]. Notwithſtanding his conviction of the importance of religion, he yet repreſents himſelf as having been very irregular in his attendance on public worſhip. When he was ſixty-three years of age, he ſays in his Meditations, in reviewing his conduct during the preceding year, "I have, I "think, been leſs guilty of neglecting "public worſhip than formerly. I have "commonly on Sunday gone once to "church, and if I have miſſed have re-"proached myſelf [8]." He ſeems alſo not to have been a very diligent reader of the ſcriptures, till towards the latter part of his life, though he appears always to have

[7] Prayers and Meditations, p. 3. [8] Ibid. p. 106.

had

had a firm belief in the divine origin of the ſacred writings. He confeſſes, when he was at a very advanced age, that there was much of the Bible, at leaſt of the Old Teſtament, which till then he had never read [9]. His MEDITATIONS, though they contain ſome remarkable inſtances of weakneſs and ſuperſtition, afford, however, a ſtrong evidence of the ſincerity of his piety, and of his ſolicitude to regulate his life in conformity to the dictates of virtue. It is not unworthy of notice, that he compoſed and addreſſed a ſhort prayer to the Deity, on the commencement of the Rambler [10].

IT is obſervable, that, in his "Medita-"tions," in which reproaches of himſelf for his faults frequently occur, no mention is ever made of that arrogance of behaviour which he frequently exhibited, and which

[9] Ibid. p. 106, 112.

[10] Ibid. p. 9.

yet ſeems to have been a predominating feature in his character. Indeed, the humility which appears in his Meditations, and the haughtineſs which he often diſplayed in his conduct, form a ſtriking contraſt.

THE arrogance of his manners muſt often have been extremely offenſive to thoſe who were connected with him, or who occaſionally viſited him: and he can hardly be ſuppoſed to have been ſerious, in what he ſaid, with apparent gravity, to Mrs. Thrale, concerning his own good breeding [11]. If he were, it is a curious inſtance of the ignorance of a man of great abilities reſpecting his own character. That he was convinced, however, of the utility and importance of good breeding, is manifeſt from the 98th number of the Rambler, in which he treats of the ad-

[11] Anecdotes, p. 36.

vantages

vantages of politeneſs to individuals and to ſociety.

The manner in which he ſpeaks, in his Meditations, of ſome of his deceaſed friends, ſufficiently evinces the warmth of his attachment to them. He ſeems to have had much regard for Mr. Thrale; and the language which he uſes, in ſpeaking of his death, is ſtriking and pathetic. "I felt," ſays he, "almoſt the laſt flutter "of his pulſe, and looked for the laſt "time upon the face that for fifteen years "had never been turned upon me but "with reſpect or benignity. Farewell. "May God, that delighteth in mercy, "have had mercy on thee [11]!"

His entertaining Mr. Levet, Mrs. Williams, and others, who were incapable of maintaining themſelves, in his own houſe, is a circumſtance that places his character

[11] Meditations, p. 184, 185.

in

in a very amiable point of view: and he appears on many occaſions to have manifeſted much tenderneſs of diſpoſition. Mrs. Piozzi's account of the benevolence exhibited by him in his own houſe, is very honourable to him. 'He nurſed,' ſays ſhe, 'whole neſts of people in his houſe, where 'the lame, the blind, the ſick, and the 'ſorrowful, found a ſure retreat from all 'the evils whence his little income could 'ſecure them [13].'

Mrs. Piozzi alſo ſays, that Dr. Johnſon's "attention to veracity was without "equal or example [14]." This ſeems an extraordinary aſſertion. Men of ſtrict veracity are certainly not ſo ſcarce as this ingenious lady imagines. No reaſonable doubt can be entertained, but that there are many men, whoſe attention to veracity is fully equal to that of Dr. Johnſon.

[13] Anecdotes, p. 85. [14] Ibid. p. 221.

But

But Mr. Tyers likewiſe ſays, that "he "always talked as if he was talking upon "oath [15]." This, however, muſt be underſtood with much limitation; for he once ſaid to Mr. Boſwell, "Nobody, at "times, talks more laxly than I do [16]." And that gentleman obſerves, that "he "could, when he choſe it, be the greateſt "ſophiſt that ever wielded a weapon in "the ſchools of declamation; but he indulged this only in converſation; for "he owned he ſometimes talked for victory [17]." It appears alſo from a converſation between him and Dr. Campbell, that this gentleman had conceived an idea of this being a practice with Dr. Johnſon [18].

His ideas of education ſeem, according to Mrs. Piozzi's account, to have been

[15] Biographical Sketch of Dr. Johnſon, p. 38.
[16] Tour to the Hebrides, p. 441.
[17] Ibid. p. 7.
[18] Ibid. p. 406.

ſome-

ſomewhat peculiar, and ſomewhat inconſiſtent. He maintained, that children were not to be taught without the infliction of pain, and yet was a ſtrong advocate for treating them with great indulgence. "No "ſcience," ſaid he, "can be communi-"cated by mortal creatures without at-"tention from the ſcholar; no attention "can be obtained from children without "the infliction of pain; and pain is never "remembered without reſentment [19]." The whole of this is certainly not true. It is often very difficult to fix the attention of children; but that their attention may frequently be fixed without the infliction of pain, is a truth with which no judicious inſtructor can be unacquainted. And it is ſurely not true, that pain inflicted on children, with a view to their future benefit, is always afterwards re-

[19] Anecdotes, p. 22.

membered

membered by them with reſentment. It is ſomewhat ſingular, that he ſhould ſpeak of his own tutor, at the univerſity, as ſo ignorant, that he did not think his inſtructions worthy of any attention [20]; and yet at another time declare, that if he had had ſons, he would have put them under his care, merely on account of the good temper of the man, and his attachment to his pupils [21]. Such a ſentiment, from any other man, would probably have been treated by Johnſon with infinite contempt.

In ſome of the accounts publiſhed of him, occaſional remarks thrown out by him in converſation, and which ſeem to have been the reſult of that propenſity to contradiction by which he was often actuated [22], appear to be given as his real ſentiments: which was probably far from

[20] Ibid. p. 30. [21] Ibid. p. 38.

[22] Vid. Mrs. Piozzi's Anecdotes, p. 223.

being

being the caſe. It can hardly be ſuppoſed, that he thought ſo lightly of parental authority as Mrs. Piozzi has repreſented; though he might certainly, without any impropriety, think that Cyrus, when he commanded armies, and conquered nations, was of ſufficient age to chooſe himſelf a wife; and alſo be of opinion, that the daughter of a houſekeeper might be allowed to ſit down in the preſence of her mother, without a formal permiſſion [a]. Johnſon might very naturally contradict any ideas on this ſubject that he thought abſurd; but when he has any occaſion to ſpeak of filial piety, in his deliberate writings, he appears to have a high ſenſe of its importance.

Mrs. Piozzi ſays of him, that every word of his merited attention, and that "every ſentiment did honour to human

[a] Ibid. p. 26, 27.

"nature;

"nature[24];" and alſo that he was "the "beſt and wiſeſt man, that ever came "within the reach of her perſonal ac- "quaintance[25]." It is, however, ſomewhat unfortunate, that in the account publiſhed of Dr. Johnſon by this ingenious lady, though, when giving a general character of him, ſhe ſpeaks in the higheſt terms of his virtues, yet many of the anecdotes, which ſhe has related of him, are extremely unfavourable to his memory; and ſuch as, it might naturally be preſumed, a zealous friend would have ſuppreſſed.

Dr. Johnson was born at Lichfield, on the 18th of September, 1709. His firſt grammatical inſtruction he received at the public grammar-ſchool at Lichfield, whence he was removed, at the age of fifteen, to the ſchool of Stourbridge, in Worceſter-

[24] Ibid. p. 269.

[25] Ibid. p. 295.

ſhire.

ſhire[16]. In 1728, he was entered of Pembroke college, Oxford. He left the univerſity in 1731, and became uſher of a grammar-ſchool at Market Boſworth in Leiceſterſhire. He afterwards married, and opened an academy at Edial, near Lichfield; but in this attempt he was very unſucceſsful, for he never had more than three pupils, one of whom was David Garrick.

In his early life, he ſuffered many of the inconveniencies of indigence. It was many years before his worth was known, or his merit acknowledged. He was feelingly convinced of the truth of the obſervation, in his own imitation of the third ſatire of Juvenal, that

SLOW RISES WORTH, BY POVERTY DEPRESS'D.

It was in the year 1737, when he was

[16] Boſwell's Life of Dr. Johnſon, vol. I. p. 12, 26, edit. 8vo. 1793.

about

about twenty-eight years of age, that he came up to the metropolis, accompanied by his pupil, David Garrick, in the hope of improving his circumſtances by the exertion of his literary talents. His firſt objects were tranſlation, either from the Latin or the French, and dramatic poetry. His friend Gilbert Warmſley particularly mentions, in a recommendatory letter of him and Garrick to Mr. Colſon, that Johnſon meant "to try his fate with a "tragedy[27]." This was his IRENE; but he probably had not intereſt enough to bring it on the ſtage; for it did not make its appearance there till twelve years after. He engaged, however, in the buſineſs of tranſlation; but was ſoon greatly diſſatisfied with the employment, and his employers. It was in the month of March that he arrived in London; and it appears from a

[27] Davies's Life of Garrick, vol. I. p. 11.

letter written in his favour by lord Gower, and dated the firſt of Auguſt, the ſame year, that he was then extremely deſirous of being choſen maſter of a country free-ſchool, the ſalary of which was ſixty pounds a year, and which lord Gower ſaid would have made him "happy for life." Thus humble was the ſituation, which was aſpired after by the man, who was afterwards to be an ornament to his country by the ſplendour of his talents, and the value and importance of his literary productions. But even this humble ſituation he could not attain. It was neceſſary that he ſhould be a maſter of arts: and the deſign of lord Gower's letter was to procure for him this degree from Trinity-college, Dublin, by the intereſt of Dean Swift, to a friend of whom his lordſhip's letter was written. The application being unſucceſsful, Johnſon ſtill continued in London,

and

and engaged in ſuch literary employment as he could procure, and particularly in writing, for the Gentleman's Magazine, an account of the parliamentary debates.

His "LONDON: a poem, in imitation "of the third ſatire of Juvenal," was publiſhed in 1738; and was afterwards followed by "the Vanity of Human "Wiſhes," an imitation of the tenth ſatire of Juvenal. Theſe are both pieces of great merit; and, indeed, all the poetical pieces of Johnſon are ſo excellent, that we naturally wiſh them to have been more numerous. It is, however, obſervable, that in his "London" are ſome very imperfect rhimes, and ſuch as could not have ſtood the teſt of that mode of criticiſm, which he has himſelf introduced in his biographical prefaces. In his "London," he has given a very unfavourable repreſentation of the metropolis of the Britiſh

empire: but it may be remarked, that after he became poſſeſſed of an income which would have enabled him to change his ſituation, London was always his favourite reſidence, and he ſeems never to have been long eaſy in any other place. In his "Vanity of Human Wiſhes," he exhibited in ſome degree his political ſentiments, by the manner in which he ſpeaks of the death of STRAFFORD, and by his panegyric on archbiſhop LAUD, whom he repreſents as having been brought to the block by his genius and his learning.

"See, when the vulgar 'ſcape, deſpis'd or aw'd,
Rebellion's vengeful talons ſeize on LAUD.
From meaner minds, tho' ſmaller fines content,
The plunder'd palace, or ſequeſter'd rent; [ſhock,
Mark'd out by DANGEROUS PARTS, he meets the
And FATAL LEARNING leads him to the block:
Around his tomb let Art and Genius weep,
But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and ſleep."

ARCHBISHOP

ARCHBISHOP LAUD undoubtedly poſſeſſed both learning and abilities, and in many reſpects promoted the intereſts of literature. But it was neither his talents nor his learning to which he owed his untimely end. The arbitrary principles of government which he laboured to maintain both in the church and in the ſtate, his zeal in ſupport of unjuſt claims, his perſecuting ſpirit, and the tyranny which he exerciſed in the Star-chamber, and in the court of high commiſſion, were the real cauſes of his being brought to the ſcaffold.

AMONG the earlieſt productions of Johnſon was his "Account of the Life of Mr. "RICHARD SAVAGE, ſon of the Earl "Rivers," the ſecond edition of which was publiſhed, in 8vo. in 1748. This has been thought too favourable to Savage; but it is an excellent piece of biography, and has great merit as a compoſition.

His Life of John Philip Barretier, which was publiſhed in 1744, is a very curious pamphlet; but it has little of Johnſon's manner, and there is ſome reaſon to ſuſpect it to be only a tranſlation. Mr. Formey, ſecretary to the Royal Academy of Sciences at Berlin, publiſhed a life of Barretier, in French, from materials furniſhed by the father of that extraordinary young man in 1741 [48]; and from ſome paſſages in Johnſon's publication, it ſeems probable, that it is only a tranſlation of that piece. But this I cannot affirm with certainty, as I have never ſeen the original.

In 1747, he publiſhed in 8vo. the "Plan of a Dictionary of the Engliſh "language; addreſſed to the Right Ho-

[48] Vid. Formey's account of his own life, prefixed to the tranſlation of his Philoſophical Miſcellanies, printed at London in 1759. p. 7.

"nourable

"nourable Philip Dormer, Earl of Cheſ-
"terfield, one of his Majeſty's principal
"ſecretaries of ſtate." He had now engaged in the compilation of his Dictionary, and was flattered by the proſpect of the patronage of lord Cheſterfield, who had teſtified his approbation of the undertaking. Though many literary men were at this time not unacquainted with Johnſon's merit, and, indeed, had a high ſenſe of it; yet his name appears not then to have been much celebrated, or very generally known; and this performance, which was very elegantly written, was well calculated to excite the attention of the public, and to ſhew how well qualified the author was for the execution of the important work in which he had engaged.

THE ſame year he wrote that fine prologue, which was ſpoken by Mr. Garrick, on the opening of Drury-lane theatre;

and in which he ſo happily delineated the genius of SHAKESPEARE:

" When learning's triumph o'er her barb'rous foes
First rear'd the ſtage, immortal SHAKESPEARE roſe;
Each change of many colour'd life he drew,
Exhauſted worlds, and then imagin'd new;
Exiſtence ſaw him ſpurn her bounded reign,
And panting Time toil'd after him in vain:
His powerful ſtrokes preſiding Truth impreſs'd,
And unreſiſted paſſion ſtorm'd the breaſt."

IT was in 1749, when he had completed his fortieth year, that his tragedy of IRENE was brought upon the ſtage; and on this occaſion he appeared, perhaps for the firſt time, in the character of a beau. He then wore at the theatre, as he himſelf informed Mr. Boſwell, a waiſtcoat richly laced [29]. This gaiety of appearance, as it was not very natural to him, was probably not long continued. The prologue to this tragedy was written in a much more manly

[29] Tour to the Hebrides, p. 458.

ſtrain

ſtrain than that frequently adopted on ſuch occaſions. It contained the following lines reſpecting the author:

" Be this at leaſt his praiſe; be this his pride;
To force applauſe no modern arts are try'd.
Should partial cat-calls all his hopes confound;
He bids no trumpet quell the fatal ſound.
Shou'd welcome ſleep relieve the weary wit,
He rolls no thunders o'er the drowſy pit.
No ſnares to captivate the judgment ſpreads;
Nor bribes your eyes to prejudice your heads.
Unmov'd, tho' witlings ſneer, and rivals rail;
Studious to pleaſe, yet not aſham'd to fail.
He ſcorns the meek addreſs, the ſuppliant ſtrain,
With merit needleſs, and without it vain."

IRENE is written with an exact regard to the unities, and the language of it is elegant and nervous. But it was not received with any great degree of applauſe. The author of it has obſerved, in the preface to his edition of Shakeſpeare, that on our ſtage " inactive declamation is very

" coldly

" coldly heard, however muſical or elegant,
" paſſionate or ſublime." There may, poſ-
ſibly, in Dr. Johnſon's tragedy, be too
much of this " inactive declamation." It
is not in a high degree intereſting, and
perhaps we may ſay of it, nearly in his
own language, that " its hopes and fears
" communicate little vibration to the
" heart." Such, however, was the gene-
ral merit of the piece, that it certainly de-
ſerved a better reception than it met with.
But, perhaps, the reaſon that it had no
greater ſucceſs in the repreſentation was,
that it was addreſſed more to the head than
to the heart; and abounded more in ſtrong
and juſt ſentiments, than in pathetic in-
cidents, or intereſting ſituations. Though
one profeſſed deſign of dramatic exhibi-
tions is to inſtruct, yet to procure a tem-
porary entertainment is the chief object of
thoſe by whom they are moſt frequently
attended.

attended. As their aim is not the acquiſition of wiſdom, but the amuſement of an hour, a very ſuperficial piece may ſometimes obtain the preference to one of much ſuperior excellence. If ever the ſtage be really made in any conſiderable degree the ſchool of virtue, perhaps the exhibitions muſt be directed by thoſe who are not pecuniarily intereſted in the conduct of it.

THE RAMBLER of Dr. Johnſon firſt began to be publiſhed, in periodical numbers, in the year 1750; and it is to this admirable performance that he owes much of his reputation. It was not, however, on its firſt publication, very popular, nor very generally read. He ſays, in his laſt Rambler, "I am far from ſuppoſing, that "the ceſſation of my performances will "raiſe any inquiry; for I have never been "much a favourite with the public; nor "can boaſt, that, in the progreſs of my under-

" undertaking, I have been animated by " the rewards of the liberal, the careſſes " of the great, or the praiſes of the emi- " nent." But the great merit of this work was at length generally acknowledged. It has ſince paſſed through many editions, and been tranſlated into foreign languages. In the RAMBLER, indeed, the fineſt ſentiments of morality and of piety are rendered delightful, by the harmony and ſplendour of the language. In his Lives of the Poets, as well as in ſome of his other works, there are no inconſiderable number of exceptionable paſſages; but his Ramblers are almoſt uniformly entitled to applauſe. The morality inculcated is pure, and the piety in general rational; and the criticiſms, and obſervations on life and manners, are acute and inſtructive. It is one of thoſe works which may repeatedly be

be read, and which will repeatedly delight.

—— Hæc decies repetita placebit.

As the RAMBLERS are leſs calculated for general reading than the SPECTATORS, they have never been equally popular; but, perhaps, they are more intereſting to literary men, as containing a greater variety of acute and original obſervations relative to the particular views, ſentiments, and purſuits of men of letters.

AMONG the beſt papers in the RAMBLER, are thoſe on retirement, on the regulation of the thoughts, the frequent contemplation of death, the importance of the early choice of a profeſſion, the neceſſity of attending to the duties of common life, the hiſtory of Eubulus, on the inconveniencies of confidence and precipitation, the diſquiſition on the value of fame, on the requiſites to true friendſhip, on a man's happineſs or miſery being chiefly to be found

at

at home, on the inattention of men to the ſhortneſs of human life, the ſtory of Cupidus, the voyage of life, on the ſufficiency of life to all purpoſes if well employed, on repentance, on the neceſſity of reviewing life, the viſit of Serotinus to the place of his nativity, on the neceſſity of labour to excellence, on the fallacioufneſs of the hopes of youth, and on the proſpects of futurity [30]. The eaſtern tales, and ſome of his allegories, have alſo great merit; and the laſt number is a very maſterly compoſition.

His character of Prospero in the Rambler, we learn from Mrs. Piozzi, was intended for Garrick [31]; and it might, poſſibly, be under the influence of ſome diſſatisfaction from the behaviour of that

[30] Numbers 7, 8, 17, 19, 24, 26, 27, 43, 49, 64, 68, 71, 73, 102, 108, 110, 155, 165, 169, 196, 203.

[31] Anecdotes, p. 49.

celebrated

celebrated actor, that he wrote the ſevere character of the manners of the generality of the players, which is inſerted in the life of Savage. He ſeems to have thought, that Garrick was more applauded than he deſerved[32]; and, perhaps, was of opinion, that the profeſſion of a player was eſtimated too highly. But there is no appearance of any reſentment againſt Garrick, in what is ſaid concerning him in the Lives of the Poets. He there ſpeaks of him with reſpect and tenderneſs; and whatever animoſities there might have occaſionally been between them, they ſeem then to have been completely obliterated by the hand of death.

In 1755, he publiſhed his Dictionary of the English language, which was eight years after the publication of his Plan. The earl of Cheſterfield wiſhed to

[32] Vid. Boſwell, p. 31, 299.

have

have had this great work dedicated to him; but as his lordſhip, though ſecretary of ſtate at the time when the PLAN of the Dictionary was addreſſed to him, had afforded the author no beneficial patronage, Johnſon, with great ſpirit, and great propriety, refuſed the compliment[33]; and he

[33] It is ſuppoſed to have been with a view to obtain the compliment of a dedication from Johnſon, that lord Cheſterfield, a ſhort time before the Dictionary was publiſhed, wrote two papers in the World in recommendation of it. Johnſon ſent him a letter upon that occaſion, which has been much and deſervedly admired. It was as follows:

'To the Right Hon. the Earl of Cheſterfield.

'My Lord, Feb. 7, 1755.

'I have been lately informed, by the proprietor of 'the World, that two papers, in which my Dictionary 'is recommended to the public, were written by your 'lordſhip. To be ſo diſtinguiſhed is an honour, 'which, being very little accuſtomed to favours from 'the great, I know not well how to receive, or in 'what terms to acknowledge.

'When,

informed the public in his preface, that his work had been executed "with little "assistance of the learned, and without "any

'When, upon some slight encouragement, I first 'visited your lordship, I was overpowered, like the 'rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your ad- 'dress; and could not forbear to wish that I might 'boast myself "Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la "terre;" that I might obtain that regard for which 'I saw the world contending; but I found my at- 'tendance so little encouraged, that neither pride 'nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When 'I had once addressed your lordship in public, I 'had exhausted all the art of pleasing, which a re- 'tired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done 'all that I could; and no man is pleased to have his 'all neglected, be it ever so little.

'Seven years, my lord, have now past, since I 'waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed 'from your door; during which time I have been 'pushing on my work through difficulties, of which 'it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at 'last, to the verge of publication, without one act

"any patronage of the great." He ſeems, indeed, and not without reaſon, to have had a conſiderable diſlike to the uſual modes of

'of aſſiſtance, one word of encouragement, or one 'ſmile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, 'for I never had a Patron before.

'The Shepherd in Virgil grew at laſt acquainted 'with love, and found him a native of the rocks.

'Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with 'unconcern on a man ſtruggling for life in the water, 'and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him 'with help? The notice, which you have been pleaſed 'to take of my labours, had it been early, had been 'kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, 'and cannot enjoy it; till I am ſolitary, and cannot 'impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. 'I hope it is no very cynical aſperity, not to confeſs 'obligations where no benefit has been received, or 'to be unwilling that the public ſhould conſider me 'as owing that to a Patron, which Providence has 'enabled me to do for myſelf.

'Having carried on my work thus far with ſo 'little obligation to any favourer of learning, I ſhall

'not

of dedication: for he ſays, in his laſt Rambler, "Having laboured to maintain "the dignity of virtue, I will not now "degrade it by the meanneſs of dedi-"cation."

His Dictionary was a work of great labour, and great merit, and has not been praiſed more than it deſerves. That it has faults cannot be denied; nor would any man, who was at all competent to judge of ſuch a work, ſuppoſe it poſſible that it

'not be diſappointed, though I ſhould conclude it, 'if leſs be poſſible, with leſs; for I have been long 'wakened from that dream of hope, in which I 'once boaſted myſelf, with ſo much exultation,

'My Lord,

'Your Lordſhip's moſt humble

'Moſt obedient ſervant,

'SAMUEL JOHNSON.'

Boſwell's Life of Johnſon, vol. I. p. 233. edit. 8vo. 1793.

ſhould be without. But by the completion of it, with all its defects, he might juſtly be conſidered as having rendered a ſignal ſervice to the republic of letters. As our language had then attained to a conſiderable degree of perfection, it was important that a common ſtandard ſhould be eſtabliſhed, which might at leaſt have ſome tendency to prevent that perpetual fluctuation, to which languages are ſubject, and thereby to ſecure to the Engliſh language, and to Engliſh authors, a more permanent duration.

THE preface to his Dictionary contains many juſt and acute obſervations reſpecting general grammar, and that of the Engliſh language in particular: and the cloſe of his preface is highly eloquent and pathetic. During the time in which he was employed in the compilation of his Dictionary, he ſometimes laboured under the accumu-

lated

lated diſtreſſes of ill health, and of a ſcanty and precarious income [34]. "The Engliſh "Dictionary," ſays he, "was not written "in the ſoft obſcurities of retirement, or "under the ſhelter of academic bowers, "but amidſt inconvenience and diſtraction, "in ſickneſs and in ſorrow." He adds, in the ſame preface, "Much of my life "has been loſt under the preſſures of "diſeaſe; much has been trifled away; "and much has always been ſpent in pro- "viſion for the day that was paſſing over "me; but I ſhall not think my employ- "ment uſeleſs or ignoble, if by my aſſiſt-

[34] Even after the publication of his Rambler and his Dictionary, he was arreſted for leſs than ſix pounds; and ſeems to have been under ſome difficulty to procure ſuch a ſum. He applied to Richardſon for his aſſiſtance on this occaſion, who advanced the money: but behaved with leſs liberality than might have been expected from the author of Sir Charles Grandiſon.

" ance foreign nations and diſtant ages
" gain acceſs to the propagators of know-
" ledge, and underſtand the teachers of
" truth; if my labours afford light to the
" repoſitories of ſcience, and add celebrity
" to Bacon, to Hooker, to Milton, and
" to Boyle."

His History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia, which was publiſhed in 1758, is elegantly written, and contains ſtriking remarks upon the vanity of human purſuits, and the unſatisfactory nature of human enjoyments; together with a variety of acute obſervations on men and manners. But the repreſentations given in it of human life are extremely gloomy, and more gloomy than are warranted by truth or reaſon. The character of Imlac is well ſuſtained, and his enumeration of the qualifications of a poet is highly eloquent; but in ſome of the converſations

between

between Raſſelas and Nekayah, the princeſs is made too profound a philoſopher. The character of the Arabian chief, by whom Pekuah was captured, is well delineated; and the diſquiſition concerning marriage is amuſing and inſtructive. It is obſervable, that in this work the reality of apparitions is ſtrongly maintained; and the remarks which it contains on diſorders of the intellect, and the dangerous prevalence of imagination, ſeem to have taken their riſe from thoſe fears of ſome derangement of underſtanding, and that morbid melancholy, with which Johnſon was not unfrequently afflicted.

The Idler, which was finiſhed in the year 1760, has, perhaps, hardly yet obtained the reputation which is deſerves. It is not equal to the Rambler; but it is, upon the whole, a very pleaſing collection of eſſays, and there are ſome papers in it

of great excellence. Among the beſt papers in the Idler are thoſe on the robbery of time, on the retirement of Drugget, on the impriſonment of debtors, on the uncertainty of friendſhip, admonitions on the flight of time, the journey of Will Marvel, on the neceſſity of ſelf-denial, on the vanity of riches, on the decline of reputation, on the progreſs of arts and language, on the fate of poſthumous works, the hiſtory of tranſlations, on the ſufficiency of the Engliſh language, and on the obſtructions of learning [35]. Some of the characters in other papers are alſo well drawn; and it is a circumſtance rather curious, that the character of SOBER, in the 31ſt number, ſhould have been intended by Johnſon, as Mrs. Piozzi informs us

[35] Numbers 14, 16, 22, 23, 43, 49, 52, 59, 62, 63, 64, 65, 68, 69, 91, 94.

it

it was [16], as a ſatirical deſcription of himſelf.

His edition of Shakespeare was publiſhed in the year 1765; it had been long delayed [17]; and, perhaps, at laſt, did not fully anſwer the expectations of the public; but many of his notes are valuable, and the ſhort ſtrictures at the end of the ſeveral plays are written with his uſual vigour. His preface is alſo a compoſition of great merit; though there are parts of it which have ſomewhat of affectation, and ſomewhat of inconſiſtency; but it contains many fine paſſages; and ſome of his remarks reſpecting the unities of time and place are original, acute, and rational. In characterizing the preceding commentators of our great dramatic poet, he has treated

[16] Anecdotes, p. 41.

[17] The propoſals for his edition of Shakeſpeare were printed in the year 1756, and the work itſelf was not publiſhed till 1765.

Theobald

Theobald with too much ſeverity, and appears not to have done him juſtice as an editor of Shakeſpeare: but he is partial to Warburton, and ſpeaks of the opponents of that prelate with a degree of contempt which they certainly did not deſerve. Since the publication of Dr. Johnſon's edition of Shakeſpeare, our great dramatic poet has been farther elucidated, and his plays enriched with many valuable notes, by the ſucceſſive labours of Mr. Steevens, Mr. Malone, Mr. Reed, and other gentlemen.

In 1767, Dr. Johnſon had a private interview with the preſent king, in the library at the queen's palace. If ſuch a man as Johnſon had been a native, or an inhabitant, of the Pruſſian dominions, in the reign of the late Frederick, the third king of Pruſſia, he would probably have been invited to the royal table. But this, in England, would have been contrary to the court

court etiquette, and too great a condeſcenſion in a prince of the houſe of Brunſwick, when elevated to the throne of Great Britain. The meeting, therefore, was formal and diſtant; and the particulars of this ſolemn ſcene have been related, by Mr. Boſwell, with a moſt reverential and ſcrupulous exactneſs.

Of the Political Writings of Dr. Johnſon, it would be injurious to the intereſts of truth, and to the common rights of human nature, to ſpeak in terms of much commendation, in any other view except as to their ſtyle. His False Alarm was publiſhed in 1770, and chiefly relates to the proceedings reſpecting Mr. Wilkes in the caſe of the Middleſex election, and to the petitions and public meetings which were occaſioned by that tranſaction. His Falkland's Islands appeared the following year, and his Patriot

TRIOT in 1774. In the latter he ridiculed the pretenſions to patriotiſm of the leaders of the popular party, oppoſed the claims of the colonies to be exempted from taxation by the Britiſh parliament, and defended the Quebec act.

IN theſe political productions many poſitions are laid down, in admirable language, and in highly poliſhed periods, which are inconſiſtent with the principles of the Engliſh conſtitution, and repugnant to the common rights of mankind [18]." As a political

[18] The above paſſage is particularly objected to by Mr. Murphy, who, in 1793, ſeven years after my Eſſay firſt appeared, publiſhed "an Eſſay on the Life "and Genius of Samuel Johnſon, L.L.D." In this piece Mr. Murphy has made a variety of remarks on my Eſſay; but he has done it in ſuch a manner, that his readers will ſometimes be at a loſs to know what author it is to whom he refers; and when he has quoted me, he has not always given my words with

tical writer, he makes much more uſe of his rhetoric than of his logic, and often gives his readers high ſounding declamation

with exactneſs. From a practiſed author, like Mr. Murphy, I might reaſonably have expected more accuracy of reference, and more accuracy of quotation.

Mr. Murphy obſerves, that when it is ſaid, that Johnſon "advanced poſitions REPUGNANT TO THE "COMMON RIGHTS OF MANKIND, the virulence of "party may be ſuſpected. It is, perhaps, true, that, "in the clamour raiſed throughout the kingdom, "Johnſon over-heated his mind; but he was a friend "to the rights of man, and he was greatly ſuperior "to the littleneſs of ſpirit that might incline him to "advance what he did not think and firmly believe." Eſſay on the Life and Genius of Samuel Johnſon, LL.D. by Arthur Murphy, Eſq; 8vo. 1793. p. 167, 168. That Johnſon "advanced poſitions repugnant "to the common rights of mankind," may certainly be aſſerted, without any virulence of party. This I conceive myſelf to have ſufficiently proved, in my Letter to Dr. Johnſon, firſt publiſhed in the year 1775,

tion inſtead of fair argument. And, in deed, in characterizing thoſe who differ from him in ſentiment, he ſeems ſometimes

1775, and now reprinted in this collection; and I muſt farther take the liberty to obſerve, that it appears to me, that the man who can ſuppoſe that Johnſon, in his political productions, wrote like a friend to the common rights of mankind, can have formed no correct ideas upon the ſubject. Indeed, Mr. Murphy himſelf appears to be influenced by prejudices too ſimilar to thoſe of Dr. Johnſon, to be an impartial inveſtigator of his political opinions, or his political productions.

Mr. Murphy has taken abundant pains to vindicate the uncandid, illiberal, and unjuſt reflections, thrown out by Dr. Johnſon againſt Milton, on account of his political conduct. But, in his efforts for this purpoſe, he has been very unſucceſsful. Mr. Murphy ſpeaks of "the proſtitution with which Milton is charged;" and which, he ſays, cannot be defended. But it would be much more eaſy to vindicate Milton from the charge of proſtitution, than it is to vindicate thoſe who bring the charge againſt him. Mr. Murphy has proved

times to pay ſo little attention to truth, equity, or candour, that, in peruſing his pieces, we are inclined readily to aſſent to

proved nothing like it. He has not ſtated the circumſtances relative to the conduct of Milton either with candour, or with equity. Milton, with great eloquence, and great reaſon, defended the execution of king Charles the Firſt; and his book written for this purpoſe has never been refuted, and never can be refuted, by any of the advocates for regal tyranny. Charles was a Tyrant, and well deſerved the fate he met with. The office which Milton held, that of Latin ſecretary, he was appointed to under the commonwealth; and though he did not quit the poſt after Cromwell became protector, there is not the leaſt evidence, that under the republic, or during the protectorate, he was employed in any ſingle act injurious to the honour, or to the intereſts of his country.

After carefully peruſing the paſſages objected to in my Eſſay by Mr. Murphy, I have not found any reaſon to alter them; nor do I apprehend, that this piece will be conſidered, by impartial judges, as deficient in candour, or as injurious to the character, or to the writings, of Dr. Johnſon.

a pro-

a propoſition of his own, that "there is "no credit due to a rhetorician's account "either of good or evil [39]." However we may reſpect the memory of Johnſon, and however unwilling we may be to ſpeak of him with harſhneſs, thoſe who impartially peruſe his political publications will be obliged to confeſs, that few party pamphlets have appeared in this country, which contain greater malignity of miſrepreſentation. Even Swift, who carried the rancour of party to a great height, hardly equalled the malignity of Johnſon's repreſentations of thoſe who differed from himſelf on political ſubjects. It ſeems difficult to ſuppoſe, that he could ſeriouſly believe many things that he has advanced, concerning thoſe whoſe political ſentiments were different from his own; and, if he did not,

[39] Life of Roger Aſcham, prefixed to his Works, p. 11.

it

it is ſtill more difficult to vindicate his conduct.

THE petitions preſented to the king about the year 1769, and in which many of the beſt and worthieſt men in the kingdom undoubtedly concurred, are repreſented by Dr. Johnſon as containing "the ſenſe "only of the profligate and diſſolute [40]." And he was ſuch an enemy to public aſſemblies of the people, and ſo little inquired whether what he advanced was truth in matters of this kind, that he maintained, that "meetings held for directing repre-"ſentatives are ſeldom attended but by the "idle and the diſſolute [41]." No man who had ever attended any meetings of that kind could be of this opinion; and next to advancing things which a man knows

[40] Falſe Alarm, p. 48.

[41] Political Tracts, p. 157.

to be falſe, is his aſſerting things which he cannot know to be true.

In 1775, he publiſhed his "Taxation "no Tyranny; an anſwer to the re- "ſolutions and addreſs of the American "congreſs." The ſtyle of this pamphlet muſt appear extraordinary to thoſe who are acquainted with the termination of the great conteſt, which then ſubſiſted between Great-Britain and the American colonies. The terms which he employs in ſpeaking of the congreſs, of the people of America, and of their cauſe, are groſsly indecent, and unworthy of a man of letters, a Chriſtian, or a philoſopher. They reflect diſhonour only on himſelf; and we are grieved that ſuch ſentiments ſhould be couched in ſuch language, and ſhould proceed from ſuch a man.

Dr. Johnſon contended, that the parliament of Great-Britain had "a legal

"and

"and conſtitutional power of laying upon "the Americans any tax or impoſt, whether "external or internal, upon the product "of land, or the manufactures of induſtry, "in the exigencies of war, or in the "time of profound peace, for the defence "of America, for the purpoſe of raiſing "a revenue, or for any other end beneficial "to the empire;" and that they had "a "right to bind them by ſtatutes, and to "bind them in all caſes whatſoever[45]." Every impartial man is now convinced of the injuſtice and ridiculouſneſs of theſe claims; and there are few who do not lament that any attempts were ever made to enforce them.

It muſt always be regretted, that a man of Johnſon's intellectual powers ſhould have had ſo ſtrong a propenſity to defend arbitrary principles of government. But

[45] Taxation no Tyranny, p. 30. edit. 1775.

on this ſubject, the ſtrength of his language was not more manifeſt than the weakneſs of his arguments. In apology for him, it may be admitted, that he was a Tory from principle, and that much of what he wrote was conformable to his real ſentiments. But to defend all that was written by him, his warmeſt friends will find impoſſible. In all his political writings, the paſſages which are, perhaps, the moſt worthy of regard, and the beſt ſupported by principles of reaſon, are thoſe in which he has introduced ſuch arguments, as ſhould prevent nations from being too ready to engage in war [43]. The inhabitants of this country have always had too great a propenſity of this kind; and it is on this ſubject only that I would recommend to them ſome attention to Dr. Johnſon as a politician.

[43] Vid. Political Tracts, p. 106, 107, 108, 109, 158.

It

It was in the autumn of the year 1773, that he undertook his journey to the Hebrides, or Weſtern iſlands of Scotland: of which he publiſhed an account in the year 1775. This is a very maſterly performance; for, beſides a very pleaſing account of his journey, it alſo contains a variety of acute obſervations on human life, and many curious incidental remarks relative to the hiſtory of literature, with which Dr. Johnſon was very intimately converſant. In this journey he was accompanied by Mr. Boſwell; and the habitual good humour of this gentleman, his vivacity, his love of literature, and his perſonal attachment to Johnſon, together with his natural influence in Scotland, muſt have rendered him a very agreeable companion to him, during the courſe of his tour to the Hebrides. Of this journey Mr. Boſwell has himſelf ſince publiſhed an ac-

count, which is highly entertaining, and which appears to contain a very natural, exact, and faithful repreſentation, not only of the incidents which occurred during the tour, but alſo of the very ſingular manners of his learned and celebrated friend.

In 1779, when he was ſeventy years of age, he publiſhed his Lives of the Poets, which ſeem to have been the moſt popular of all his productions. Theſe, conſidered as compoſitions, and as abounding with ſtrong and acute remarks, and with many very fine, and ſome even ſublime paſſages, have unqueſtionably great merit; but if they be regarded merely as containing narrations of the lives, delineations of the characters, and ſtrictures on the works of the authors concerning whom he wrote, they are far from being always to be depended on; the characters are ſometimes partial, and there is ſometimes

times too much malignity of misrepresentation; to which, perhaps, may be added, no inconsiderable portion of erroneous criticism.

The first life which occurs in this collection is that of Cowley, which is very favourably written, and contains an elaborate criticism on his works. The false taste, which so frequently appears in the productions of that poet, is treated by his biographer with sufficient indulgence; and we are apt to be somewhat surprized, that so fastidious a critic, as Johnson sometimes was, should descant so copiously on such petty conceits, as Cowley frequently exhibits. He is unjustly partial to Cowley in the preference which he gives to his Latin poetry over that of Milton; but his observations on the writings of the metaphysical poets are novel and ingenious.

The second life in this collection is that

of WALLER, of whom Dr. Johnſon ſays, that, in 1640, he "produced one of thoſe "noiſy ſpeeches which diſaffection and diſ- "content regularly dictate; a ſpeech filled "with hyperbolical complaints of imaginary "grievances [44]." This "noiſy ſpeech," as our author terms it, was dictated by good ſenſe and real patriotiſm. The complaints in it were not hyperbolical, and the grievances that Waller enumerated were real, and not imaginary. The grievances of which he complained were the encroachments of prerogative on the rights of the people, the impriſoning their perſons without law, and the power aſſumed by the king of taxing his ſubjects, and ſeizing their property, without the authority of parliament; and the language of the complaints made by him on this ſubject was not too ſtrong for the occaſion. He after-

[44] Life of Waller, p. 15. edit. 1779.

wards

wards made a ſpeech in favour of epiſcopacy: but with this his biographer was better pleaſed, and ſpeaks in terms of high commendation. The character of Waller by Clarendon is given by Johnſon at full length: upon which it may not be improper to obſerve, that the noble hiſtorian's account is in ſeveral particulars manifeſtly erroneous; and as it is ſaid that Waller had ſome animoſity againſt Clarendon, it ſeems equally apparent, that the latter wrote the character of the poet under the influence of ſentiments of perſonal diſlike.

In his life of Milton, he has ſpoken in the higheſt terms of the abilities of that great poet, and has beſtowed on his principal poetical compoſitions the moſt honourable encomiums: but he has very injuriouſly miſrepreſented his character and conduct as a man. He could not endure thoſe high ſentiments of liberty, which

Milton

Milton was ſo ardently deſirous to propagate. He viewed with averſion the man, who had dared publickly to defend the execution of king Charles the Firſt. There is ſomething curious, in tracing the conduct of Johnſon with reſpect to Milton, and in obſerving the ſtruggle which there was in his mind concerning him, reſulting from his reverence for him as a poet, and his rooted diſlike againſt him as a political writer. It can hardly be doubted, but that his averſion to Milton's politics, was the cauſe of that alacrity, with which he joined with Lauder, in his infamous attack on our great epic poet, and which induced him to aſſiſt him in that tranſaction [45]. But Johnſon was unacquainted with

[45] Sir John Hawkins ſays, that, in the Rambler, "an eulogium on Knolles's Hiſtory of the Turks, "and a ſevere cenſure on the Samſon Agoniſtes of "Milton,

with the impoſture; and, when it was diſcovered, urged Lauder to an open recantation. It is well known, that the forgeries of Lauder were completely detected by

" Milton, are the only critical eſſays there to be " found. To the latter he ſeems to have been " prompted by no better a motive, than that hatred " of the author for his political principles, which he " is known to have entertained, and was ever ready " to avow." Speaking of Lauder's " Eſſay on " Milton's Uſe and Imitation of the Moderns," Sir John alſo ſays, " While the book was in the preſs, " the proof ſheets were ſubmitted to the inſpection " of our club, by a member of it who had an intereſt " in its publication; and I could all along obſerve, " that Johnſon ſeemed to approve, not only of the " deſign, but of the argument, and ſeemed to exult " in the perſuaſion, that the reputation of Milton " was likely to ſuffer by this diſcovery. That he " was not privy to the impoſture, I am well per- " ſuaded; but that he wiſhed well to the argument " muſt be inferred from the preface, which indubi- " tably was written by Johnſon." Life of Samuel Johnſon, L.L.D. ſecond edit. p. 274, 275, 276.

Dr.

Dr. Douglas, now biſhop of Saliſbury, and that by that ingenious and able writer Milton was ſufficiently vindicated from the charge of plagiariſm. But it is, perhaps, not generally known, that Lauder died, ſome years ſince, in very indigent circumſtances, at Barbadoes [46].

It ſeems to have been by way of making ſome compenſation to the memory of Milton, for the ſhare he had in the attack of Lauder, that Johnſon wrote the prologue that was ſpoken by Garrick, at Drury-lane theatre, in 1750, on the performance of the maſk of Comus, for the benefit of Milton's grand-daughter; and in which the following lines appear to refer to the detection of Lauder:

[46] I was informed of this fact by the clergyman who performed the burial ſervice at the interment of Lauder, and who advanced the money for the expences of his funeral, but which he was afterwards repaid by the ſon of Lauder.

At

" At length our mighty Bard's victorious lays,
Fill the loud voice of univerſal praiſe,
And baffled ſpite, with hopeleſs anguiſh dumb,
Yields to renown the centuries to come."

BUT many years after, when his Lives of the Poets appeared, his old diſlike to Milton's politics was again manifeſted; and we ſee ſtrikingly exhibited, in his account of him, his reverence for his talents, and his averſion for his principles.

Dr. Johnſon ſays, that Milton " left the " univerſity with no kindneſs for its inſti- " tution, alienated either by the injudicious " ſeverity of his governors, or his own cap- " tious perverſeneſs. The cauſe cannot now " be known, but the effect appears in his " writings [47]." That Milton thought the univerſities needed reformation, we may, indeed, learn from his writings; and many other able men, who have received their

[47] Life of Milton, p. 10.

education

education in theſe antient and celebrated ſeminaries, have been of the ſame opinion. It is unjuſt, therefore, to impute theſe ſentiments to circumſtances of perſonal diſguſt, or to captiouſneſs of temper. He has ſhewn, by his piece addreſſed to Mr. Hartlib, that he had conceived ideas of a more perfect plan of education; and it is not a ſubject of ſurprize, that a man, whoſe underſtanding was ſo highly cultivated, and who poſſeſſed a mind ſo comprehenſive as that of Milton, ſhould ſometimes form ſchemes of better modes of education than thoſe which have hitherto been adopted.

JOHNSON ridicules Milton, with very little reaſon, for haſtening home from his travels, "becauſe his countrymen were "contending for their liberty, and, when "he reached the ſcene of action, vapour-"ing away his patriotiſm in a private "boarding-

" boarding-ſchool [43]." The fact is, that when not engaged in more important occupations, Milton employed himſelf in the inſtruction of ſome private pupils; but he never deſerted his principles, nor was backward to exert himſelf in the promotion of the cauſe that he eſpouſed. There is no reaſon to doubt, but that he would have defended it with his ſword, as well as with his pen, if a proper opportunity had offered; for his perſonal courage was unqueſtioned. But no proper military office was beſtowed upon him, though it ſeems to have been intended, and was never declined on his part. His learning and abilities, however, qualified him to ſerve the cauſe that he eſpouſed, more advantageouſly by his pen than by his ſword; and he engaged in it with great ardour, and great

[43] Life, p. 25, 26.

eloquence,

eloquence, and in ſuch a manner as excited the attention of all Europe.

But though Dr. Johnſon at firſt attacks Milton for inactivity in the cauſe that he eſpouſed, he ſoon finds his activity too great. He ſays, that about the year 1641, Milton "began to engage in the contro-" verſies of the times, and lent his breath " to blow the flames of contention[49]." The truth is, that Milton thought, that ſome reformation was neceſſary both in the church and in the ſtate; he was deſirous of promoting the intereſts of civil and religious liberty; and, therefore, publiſhed ſuch pieces as he ſuppoſed calculated to promote the cauſe of public freedom. Of one piece, which was publiſhed by Milton at this time, on the ſubject of "Prelatical Epiſcopacy," Johnſon has given the title, in order to ſhew that our

[49] Ibid. p. 32, 33.

great

great epic poet " had now adopted the " puritanical ſavageneſs of manners [50]." But by thoſe who impartially read this title, it will be difficult to diſcover any thing, to which the word ſavage can with the leaſt propriety be applied.

Dr. Johnſon ſays, that Milton's " political notions were thoſe of an acrimonious and ſurly Republican, for which " it is not known that he gave any better " reaſon, than that a popular government " was the moſt frugal; for the trappings " of a monarchy would ſet up an ordinary " commonwealth [51]." Every man, who is much converſant in the proſe writings of Milton, muſt be convinced, that this aſſertion of Johnſon is not true; and all may be convinced of it, who will peruſe his " Ready and eaſy way to eſtabliſh a " Free Commonwealth, and the excel-

[50] Ibid. p. 34. [51] Ibid. p. 142.

" lence thereof compared with the incon-
" veniencies and dangers of re-admitting
" Kingſhip in this nation [52]."

OTHER

[52] In this piece, Milton ſays, " A free Common-
" wealth was not only held by wiſeſt men in all ages,
" the nobleſt, the manlieſt, the equalleſt, the juſteſt
" government, the moſt agreeable to due liberty, and
" proportioned equality, both human, civil, and
" Chriſtian, moſt cheriſhing to virtue and true reli-
" gion, but alſo (I may ſay it with greateſt proba-
" bility) plainly commended, or rather enjoined, by
" our Saviour himſelf to all Chriſtians, not without
" a remarkable diſallowance, and the brand of
" Gentiliſm upon Kingſhip."——" That people
" muſt needs be mad, or ſtrangely infatuated, that
" build the chief hope of their common happineſs
" or ſafety on a ſingle perſon; who, if he happen
" to be good, can do no more than another man;
" if to be bad, hath in his hands to do more evil
" without check, than millions of other men. The
" happineſs of a nation muſt needs be firmeſt and
" certaineſt in a full and free council of their own
" electing, where no ſingle perſon, but reaſon only
ſways."

OTHER writers, as well as Johnſon, have ſpoken with ſeverity of Milton, as being a republican. But it could be no

" ſways."—" Of all governments a commonwealth " aims moſt to make the people flouriſhing, virtuous, " noble, and high ſpirited." Milton's Proſe Works, Vol. II. p. 786, 787, 795. edit. 1698.

In his DEFENSIO PRO POPULO ANGLICANO, he alſo ſays, *Deus niſi invitus, populum ſuum ſub regio imperio eſſe noluit; natura quid ſuadeat et recta ratio, non ex pluribus, ſed ex prudentiſſimis nationibus optimè perſpicitur. Græci, Romani, Itali, Carthaginienſes, multique alii ſuopte ingenio vel optimatium vel populi imperium regio prætulerunt; atque hæ quidem nationes cæterarum omnium inſtar ſunt. Hinc Sulpitius Severus,* Regium nomen cunctis ferè liberis gentibus ſemper inviſum, *fuiſſe tradit.* DEFENSIO, p. 101, edit. London, 4to. 1651.

From ſundry other paſſages in Milton's proſe-works, there ſeems, however, reaſon to believe, that he would not have been diſſatisfied under the government of a king, if the liberties of the people had been properly ſecured, and the power of the prince reſtrained and limited, according to the true principles of the Engliſh conſtitution.

diſgrace to any man, who had lived under the tyrannical government of the Stuarts, that he ſhould think a republic preferable. His DEFENSIO PRO POPULO ANGLICANO has alſo brought upon him many reproaches. But in this piece he evidently wrote in conformity to his real ſentiments, and his arguments have never been refuted. Charles I. had violated his moſt ſolemn engagements to his people, he had trampled on their antient conſtitution, and moſt important rights, and at length, in conſequence of his tyrannical adminiſtration, deſervedly loſt his head upon a ſcaffold. It was this tranſaction which Milton vindicated: and he may be ſupported by reaſons which cannot be anſwered, by the ableſt and the warmeſt advocates for royalty. Thoſe who reverence Milton as a poet will likewiſe find, if his conduct be accurately and impartially examined, that he is alſo juſtly

entitled

entitled to our reverence as a man, and as a citizen.

Dr. Johnſon has given a quotation from Milton's ſecond Defence of the People of England, in order to prove that he flattered Cromwell; and it is certain, that in this piece great encomiums are beſtowed on the protector. But Milton then hoped, with many others, that Cromwell would really eſtabliſh a free commonwealth; and was far from being ſingular in forming high ideas of the protector's merit. It ſhould alſo be remembered, that, in the ſame performance, he exhorts Cromwell, in the ſtrongeſt terms, not to deſert thoſe great principles of liberty which he had profeſſed to eſpouſe; and ſhews what an enormity it would be, if after having ſucceſsfully oppoſed tyranny, he ſhould himſelf act the part of a tyrant, and betray the cauſe that he had defended.

MILTON was firſt employed as Latin ſecretary under the commonwealth, and though he continued to execute the office under the protectorate of Cromwell, yet he never was a confident of Oliver's, nor was employed in the promotion of his views; and ſeems only to have written thoſe public diſpatches, which related to the general intereſts of the kingdom. He never deſerted his principles; and was ever ardently deſirous of eſtabliſhing and ſecuring the liberties of his country. As to the ſtory, which Dr. Johnſon is inclined to reject, as "an obſcure ſtory[53]," of a reply made by Milton to his wife, relative to a propoſal of his continuing to execute the office of Latin ſecretary, after the Reſtoration, it is perfectly ſuitable to his character, and is more probable, and much

[53] P. 91.

better

better atteſted, than many of thoſe which are given in theſe Lives of the Poets. But it implied a degree of public ſpirit, and of conſiſtency, in Milton, which Johnſon was unwilling to admit.

It has been lamented by ſome ingenious writers, that Milton ſhould have employed ſo much of the earlier part of his life in the compoſition of his proſe pieces, on political and controverſial ſubjects, inſtead of applying himſelf to the cultivation and exertion of his poetical talents. But Milton thought, and perhaps not irrationally, that to promote the intereſts of liberty, civil and religious, to exert his abilities in the advancement of truth and virtue, was a more important and a more dignified employment, than even "embelliſhing ori-" ginal tales of chivalry," or "cloathing "the fabulous atchievements of the early

"British kings and champions in the "gorgeous trappings of epic attire [54]."

Mr. Thomas Warton, to whom the public are indebted for many ingenious and elegant productions, but whose political sentiments were somewhat similar to those of Dr. Johnson, has discovered the same propensity to degrade and discredit Milton as a prose-writer [55]. He says, that "his "DEFENSIO PRO POPULO ANGLICANO "against Salmasius, so liberally rewarded "by the Presbyterian administration, the "best apology that ever was offered for "bringing kings to the block, and which "diffused his reputation all over Europe, "is remembered no more [56]." That his Defence of the People of England, as it

[54] Vid. Warton's Preface to his edition of Milton's Poems, p. 12.

[55] Vid. the notes to the new edition of Milton's Poems, p. 587, 588.

[56] Ibid. p. 589.

related

related to a tranſaction which happened more than a century ago, is not now very generally read, may be readily admitted; but that it "is remembered no "more," is ſurely a ſtrange aſſertion. But Mr. Warton alſo obſerves, that "Milton's "plan of education to Hartlib has more "ſhow than value. He does not recom-"mend thoſe ſtudies to boys, which, as "Cicero ſays, in a paſſage ſuperficially "underſtood, Adoleſcentiam ALUNT, ad-"verſas res ornant, proſperis perfugium et "ſolatium præbent, delectant domi, non "impediunt foris, peregrinantur nobiſcum, "ruſticantur. Inſtead of laying a ſtreſs "upon ſuch authors as open and enlarge "a young underſtanding, he preſcribes an "early acquaintance with geometry and "phyſics. But theſe will teach no gene-"rous ſentiments, nor inculcate ſuch "knowledge as is of uſe at all times and

"on

" on all occaſions [57]." It might be inferred from Mr. Warton's obſervations, as well as from ſome remarks of Dr. Johnſon, that Milton had ſlighted poetry, hiſtory, and moral philoſophy, and recommended little attention to any other ſtudies but thoſe of mathematics and natural philoſophy. But thoſe who will take the pains to peruſe his " Tractate of Educa-" tion," will find, that this was far from being the caſe. He recommends, indeed, an early acquaintance with phyſical authors; but he alſo ſays, " The main ſkill " and groundwork will be, to temper " them ſuch lectures and explanations " upon every opportunity, as may lead " and draw them in willing obedience, " enflamed with the ſtudy of learning, and " the admiration of virtue, ſtirred up with " high hopes of living to be brave men,

[57] Ibid. p. 117.

" and

" and worthy patriots, dear to God, and " famous to all ages." He alſo hopes, that there might be infuſed " into their " young breaſts ſuch an ingenuous and " noble ardour, as would not fail to make " many of them renowned and matchleſs " men. At the ſame time, ſome other " hour of the day, might be taught them " the rules of arithmetic, and ſoon after " the elements of geometry even playing, " as the old manner was. After evening " repaſt, till bed-time, their thoughts " will be beſt taken up in the eaſy grounds " of religion, and the ſtory of ſcripture." He afterwards recommends, that they ſhould be amply inſtructed " in the know- " ledge of virtue, and the hatred of vice; " while their young and pliant affections " are led through all the moral works of " Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, Plutarch, " Laertius, and thoſe Locrian remains."

And

And after mentioning other objects of ſtudy, he adds, " When all theſe employ-
" ments are well conquered, then will the
" choice hiſtories, heroic poems, and Attic
" tragedies, of ſtatelieſt and moſt regal
" argument, with all the famous political
" orations, offer themſelves: which, if
" they were not only read, but ſome of
" them got by memory, and ſolemnly
" pronounced, with right accent and grace,
" as might be taught, would endue them
" even with the ſpirit and vigour of De-
" moſthenes or Cicero, Euripides, or
" Sophocles." He likewiſe remarks, that the plan of ſtudy which he recommended, was that which he ſuppoſed to approach the neareſt " to thoſe antient and famous
" ſchools of Pythagoras, Plato, Iſocrates,
" Ariſtotle, and ſuch others, out of which
" were bred up ſuch a number of renowned
" philoſophers, orators, hiſtorians, poets,
" and

" and princes, all over Greece, Italy, and " Aſia, beſides the flouriſhing ſtudies of " Cyrene and Alexandria."

But though I think it appears from theſe paſſages, and from others, that Mr. Warton has not done juſtice to Milton's treatiſe on education, yet I perfectly concur with him in approving the following admirable obſervations of Dr. Johnſon. " The truth is, that the knowledge of " external nature, and of the ſciences " which that knowledge requires or in- " cludes, is not the great or the frequent " buſineſs of the human mind. Whether " we provide for action or converſation, " whether we wiſh to be uſeful or pleaſing, " the firſt requiſite is the religious and " moral knowledge of right and wrong; " the next is an acquaintance with the " hiſtory of mankind, and with thoſe " examples which may be ſaid to embody

" truth,

" truth, and prove by events the reaſon-
" ableneſs of opinions. Prudence and
" juſtice are virtues, and excellencies, of
" all times, and of all places: we are
" perpetually moraliſts, but we are geo-
" metricians only by chance. Our inter-
" courſe with intellectual nature is neceſ-
" ſary; our ſpeculations upon matter are
" voluntary, and at leiſure. Phyſical
" knowledge is of ſuch rare emergence,
" that one man may know another half
" his life without being able to eſtimate
" his ſkill in hydroſtatics or aſtronomy;
" but his moral and prudential character
" immediately appears. Thoſe authors,
" therefore, are to be read at ſchools, that
" ſupply moſt axioms of prudence, moſt
" principles of moral truth, and moſt ma-
" terials for converſation; and thoſe pur-
" poſes are beſt ſerved by poets, orators,
" and hiſtorians [58]."

[58] Life of Milton, p. 28, 29, 30.

In

In juſtice to Mr. Warton, it ſhould alſo be obſerved, that however injuriouſly he may have treated Milton's proſe-works, he has very ſkilfully and ably vindicated ſome of his ſmaller poems, from ſeveral erroneous and ill-grounded criticiſms that have been publiſhed againſt them, and particularly by Dr. Johnſon; and has alſo illuſtrated theſe poems, in his notes, with much ingenuity and erudition.

In the account given by Dr. Johnſon of the religion of Milton, he has aſſerted what he could not poſſibly know to be true, and what thoſe, who duly attend to Milton's character, will not eaſily believe. He ſays, that "Milton, who appears to have "had full conviction of the truth of "Chriſtianity, and to have regarded the "holy ſcriptures with the profoundeſt ve-"neration, to have been untainted by any "heretical

" heretical peculiarity of opinion, and to " have lived in a confirmed belief of the " immediate and occaſional agency of pro- " vidence, yet grew old without any viſible " worſhip. In the diſtribution of his " hours, there was no hour of prayer, " either ſolitary, or with his houſehold; " omitting public prayers, he omitted " all [59]."

As Milton is well known to have diſſented from the eſtabliſhed church, it is not a ſubject of much ſurpriſe, that he ſhould abſent himſelf from its public ſervices. It may alſo be remarked, that the Nonconformiſts of that period were generally Calviniſts, and Milton did not probably concur with them in opinion. Theſe circumſtances might prevent him, in the latter part of his life, from connecting

[59] Ibid. p. 140, 141.

himſelf

himſelf with any particular body of Chriſtians, and from attending their religious ſervices. But it cannot hence be rationally inferred, nor becauſe his ſtated hours of prayer are not known, that he omitted private devotion. As to private prayer, indeed, Milton had learned from the New Teſtament, that a man's private devotions ſhould be performed with ſecrecy; and, therefore, we need not wonder, that of theſe none of his biographers give any account. But we are not hence to conclude, that he practiſed no devotion. That a man, whoſe ordinary practice it was to have a chapter read to him out of the Hebrew Bible, at his firſt riſing in the morning, and whoſe writings breathe a ſtrain of the moſt fervent piety, ſhould omit all devotions, both public and private, is incredible; and, indeed, Dr. Johnſon himſelf at laſt ſays, ſomewhat in-

conſiſtently, "That he lived without "prayer can hardly be affirmed; his "ſtudies and meditations were a continual "prayer[60]."

In his life of Milton, he has alſo made ſome remarks on the dangers attendant on the freedom of the preſs, and the inconveniencies which would reſult from reſtraining it. Much more, however, is ſaid by him againſt it than for it; and on that ſide of the queſtion his arguments are evidently intended to preponderate. But the poſitions advanced by him are erroneous and ill founded. One of his arguments againſt the liberty of the preſs is, that "if every ſceptic in theology may teach "his follies, there can be no religion[61]." But ſurely it is no neceſſary conſequence of the permiſſion of any publications in

[60] Ibid. p. 142.

[61] Life of Milton, p. 45, 46.

theology,

theology, that all religion will be overturned. Every principle of real religion is founded upon arguments, and upon evidence, too powerful to be ſhaken by the cavils of ſcepticiſm; and thoſe theological dogmas, which require the aid of civil authority for their ſupport, are unworthy of defence. The other arguments of Dr. Johnſon, againſt the freedom of the preſs, are equally inconcluſive.

ONE of the moſt cenſurable paſſages in Johnſon's Life of Milton, is the following: "As faction ſeldom leaves a man honeſt, "however it might find him, Milton is "ſuſpected of having interpolated the "book called ICON BASILIKE, which the "council of ſtate, to whom he was now "made Latin ſecretary, employed him to "cenſure, by inſerting a paper taken from "Sidney's Arcadia, and imputing it to the

" king [61]." This ridiculous charge againſt Milton is ſo totally deſtitute of any proper evidence, and, independently of his character as a man of honour, ſo improbable in itſelf, that it is not eaſy to conceive that his biographer, with all his prejudices, could even entertain a ſuſpicion of its being true; and it was extremely unworthy of Dr. Johnſon, to give the leaſt countenance to ſo ungenerous and ſo unſupported an imputation againſt an illuſtrious man, who was diſtinguiſhed not only by the ſublimity of his genius, but by his integrity and virtue.

But though, in his life of Milton, a propenſity to repreſent his actions in a very unfavourable light is manifeſt throughout, yet when he comes to treat of his principal poetical productions, and eſpecially his Paradiſe Loſt, he has diſplayed their excel-

[61] P. 51.

lencies

lencies in the moſt animated and elevated language. He ſays of the Paradiſe Loſt, that it is " a poem, which, conſidered " with reſpect to deſign, may claim the " firſt place, and with reſpect to per- " formance the ſecond, among the pro- " ductions of the human mind [63]." And in another place he obſerves, that " his " great works were performed under diſ- " countenance, and in blindneſs, but dif- " ficulties vaniſhed at his touch; he was " born for whatever is arduous; and his " work is not the greateſt of heroic poems, " only becauſe it is not the firſt [64]."

AFTER Milton, the next life which occurs in Dr. Johnſon's Biographical Prefaces, is that of BUTLER. From the little that is known of the author of Hudibras, it was not to be expected that the life of him could be very intereſting. But Johnſon

[63] Ibid. p. 169. [64] Ibid. p. 223.

has rendered his account of him highly valuable, by the ſtriking remarks that he has introduced on literary compoſition, and on the means of attaining to literary excellence.

Of DRYDEN, whom he conſiders not only as a great poet, but as "the Father "of Engliſh criticiſm," the account given by Johnſon is very curious, and more copious than his other lives. He was inclined to be favourable to Dryden; this appears in his general narration, and in his criticiſms on his writings; and his turning Papiſt, on the acceſſion of a Popiſh king, is dextrouſly palliated.

IN his account of ADDISON, the general repreſentation given of his merit as a writer is very juſt, and very happily expreſſed. But he ſeems ſometimes too much inclined to ſpeak diſparagingly of him as a man, and too ready to admit ſtories to his prejudice,

prejudice, without ſufficient evidence. Addiſon is too much degraded in the buſineſs of his marriage, and the circumſtances related concerning it are probably exaggerated. Some particulars, which are diſadvantageous to Addiſon's memory, are alſo, perhaps, taken too implicitly from Spence's account of his converſations with Pope; who appears to have retained more malignity againſt Addiſon, "from their "antient rivalry," than is admitted by Dr. Johnſon [65]. It may alſo be here obſerved, that the ſtory related of Addiſon, in the life of Edmund Smith [66], is a very improbable one, and very unſuitable to Addiſon's character. He was not a man to treat with contempt any objection to engaging in a literary work, which aroſe from motives of conſcience. Had the ſtory been related by Smith himſelf, the

[65] Life of Addiſon, p. 64.

[66] P. 44.

 teſtimony

teſtimony of a perſon of ſo diſſolute a character, ought not to have been implicitly received to the prejudice of a man, whoſe character for integrity was ſo well eſtabliſhed as that of Addiſon. But Dr. Johnſon received it neither from Smith, nor from his friend; nor are we made acquainted even with the name of the friend of Smith, to whom the ſtory was originally communicated.

THE criticiſms of Johnſon on the poetical works of SWIFT are very ſhort; and he appears to have been uninclined to ſpeak favourably either of his character, or of his writings. The abilities of the Dean of St. Patrick's have, perhaps, been overrated; but however that be, Johnſon ſeems, as Mr. Boſwell obſerves [67], to have been prejudiced againſt him; nor has he done juſtice to his talents in his life of him.

[67] Boſwell's Tour to the Hebrides, p. 38.

THE

THE poems of PRIOR are criticiſed by him with great ſeverity; and he ſeems, upon the whole, to have under-rated his merit. It would, perhaps, be difficult to meet with any reader of taſte, who would concur in opinion with Johnſon reſpecting Henry and Emma. It is obſervable, that in his life of Prior, he ſpeaks of king William, whom in converſation he diſtinguiſhed by the epithet of "ſcoundrel[68]," in more reſpectful terms than might have been expected. "King William," ſays he, "ſupplied copious materials for either "verſe or proſe. His whole life had been "action, and no man denies him the re-"ſplendent qualities of ſteady reſolution "and perſonal courage. He was really in "Prior's mind what he repreſents him "in his verſes: he conſidered him as a "hero, and was accuſtomed to ſay, that

[68] Ibid. p. 312.

"he

" he praiſed others in compliance with " the faſhion, but that in celebrating king " William he followed his inclination. " To Prior gratitude would dictate praiſe, " which reaſon would not refuſe [69]."

In his account of Dr. King, he takes occaſion to cenſure the WILD PRINCIPLES, which, he ſays, were introduced by Lord Moleſworth in his " Account of Den- " mark [70]." Theſe wild principles were the ſame principles of government that were maintained and aſſerted by SYDNEY and by LOCKE, and by the beſt and ableſt writers that have appeared upon the ſubject. Dr. Johnſon is miſtaken in the ſtory which he tells, in his life of Lord Halifax [71], of that nobleman being diſconcerted, and obliged for ſome time to be ſilent, when attempting to ſpeak in favour of the

[69] Life of Prior, p. 10. [70] Life of King, p. 3.
[71] P. 5.

bill

bill for granting counſel to priſoners in caſes of high treaſon, and afterwards urging his temporary embarraſment as an argument in favour of the bill. That circumſtance happened not to lord Halifax, but to lord Shafteſbury, the celebrated author of the Characteriſtics [72].

The life of Pope contains a variety of intereſting information concerning that celebrated poet; many particulars in his character are nicely and accurately diſcriminated; and the compariſon between Pope and Dryden is very finely written. But in his life of Pope, he has given the account of the quarrel between him and Addiſon, with too much reliance upon the teſtimony of the former, whoſe account is far from being entitled to implicit credit. Speaking of Pope's tranſlation of

[72] Vid. Torbuck's Parliamentary Debates, vol. III. p. 46. Biographia Britan. General Dict. &c.

the

the Iliad, and of Tickell's verſion of the firſt book, Johnſon ſays, that Pope "was "convinced, by adding one circumſtance to "another, that the other tranſlation (that "publiſhed by Tickell) was the work of "Addiſon himſelf; but if he knew it in "Addiſon's life-time, it does not appear "that he told it. He left his illuſtrious "antagoniſt to be puniſhed, by what has "been conſidered as the moſt painful of "all reflections, the remembrance of a "crime perpetrated in vain [73]."

Of this charge againſt Addiſon, and of other particulars with which he is accuſed, relative to the quarrel between him and Pope, no proper evidence has ever been produced. Dr. Johnſon ſeems not to have examined the matter with much care: but many of the circumſtances reſpecting it were examined with great accuracy by the

[73] Life of Pope, p. 106, 107.

late

late Judge Blackſtone[74]; who obſerves, that Addiſon "had been dead many "years before any of the particulars were "divulged, and thoſe which are now "given us come only from Mr. Pope him-"ſelf." The firſt regular ſtatement of theſe accuſations againſt Addiſon was publiſhed by Ruffhead, in his life of Pope, with the materials of which he was furniſhed by Dr. Warburton. But as Blackſtone has obſerved, and fully proved, "it "is evident from dates and facts, chiefly "extant in Mr. Pope's own works, that "the account given by Mr. Ruffhead "cannot poſſibly be altogether true, and "is hardly accurate in a ſingle particu-"lar[75]." Johnſon's account and Ruffhead's are both evidently derived from the

[74] In the new Edition of the Biographia Britannica, art. ADDISON, note [U].

[75] Ibid.

ſame

ſame ſource, the account written by Spence of his converſations with Pope. But an exact adherence to truth, in matters in which his own intereſt or fame were concerned, ſeems not to have been one of the virtues of Pope; for, on ſeveral occaſions, his veracity appears to have been more than queſtionable[76]. Some of the particulars in Ruffhead's account are inconſiſtent with Pope's own letters; and it may alſo be obſerved, that the elegant, but ſevere lines of Pope againſt Addiſon, were not made public till two years after the death of the latter; though it is manifeſt even from thoſe lines, as Blackſtone has remarked, that Pope himſelf did not then believe Addiſon to have been the author of the tranſlation publiſhed by Tickell. Thoſe

[76] Vid. Johnſon's life of Pope, p. 121, 137, 142. Life of Savage, p. 48, 49. edit. 1781. Life of Broome, p. 5, 6.

who

who would judge impartially of the whole of this controverſy, ſhould attentively peruſe the paper written by Judge Blackſtone upon the ſubject.

In the account of the life of Lord Lyttelton is a ſingular paſſage, from which, if taken by itſelf, it might be preſumed to be Johnſon's opinion, that every man of genius muſt, in the earlier part of his life, be a zealous Whig. But this will hardly be ſuppoſed to have been his opinion. He ſays of Lord Lyttelton's "Perſian Letters," that they "have ſomething of "that indiſtinct and headſtrong ardour for "liberty, which a man of genius always "catches when he enters the world, and "always ſuffers to cool as he paſſes forward[77]." He has not done juſtice to Lord Lyttelton's merit as a writer; and ſeems to have confeſſed to Mrs. Thrale,

[77] Life of Lyttelton, p. 2.

that

that he wrote his life with ſome perſonal prejudice againſt him [78].

Mr. Tyers ſays of Dr. Johnſon, that "he was fitted by nature for a critic [79]." That he had great powers of diſcrimination, and often diſplayed great critical abilities, muſt be acknowledged: but it is at the ſame time true, that his criticiſms were very far from being always juſt. It may, perhaps, be doubted, whether his various perſonal and ſyſtematical prejudices did not, in a conſiderable degree, diſqualify him, at leaſt in many inſtances, for properly diſcharging the office of a judicious and impartial critic. His deciſions ſeem to have been received with too implicit a reverence by his friends and admirers. Whatever the conceptions of Johnſon were, he could expreſs them with acuteneſs and with vigour; and his

[78] Anecdotes, p. 261.

[79] Biographical Sketch, p. 41.

criticiſms

criticiſms were often rendered important; not by the juſtneſs of the remarks which they contained, but by the ſtrength of the language in which they were delivered. In his Lives of the Poets, he has not done juſtice to the productions of HAMMOND, of GAY, or of AKENSIDE; and his rude and arrogant criticiſms on the ſublime odes of GRAY, can be peruſed by a reader of true poetical taſte only with diſguſt. Nor do Johnſon's remarks on Milton's LYCIDAS do any honour to his critical abilities. Few men of real taſte have been inſenſible of its beauties; and Dr. Joſeph Warton obſerves [80], that as "Addiſon ſays, that he "who deſires to know whether he has a "true taſte for Hiſtory or not, ſhould con-"ſider, whether he is pleaſed with Livy's "manner of telling a ſtory; ſo, perhaps

[80] In Mr. Thomas Warton's Edition of Milton's Poems, p. 34.

" it may be ſaid, that he who wiſhes to " know whether he has a true taſte for " Poetry or not, ſhould conſider, whether " he is highly delighted or not with the " peruſal of Milton's Lycidas." But Dr. Johnſon is of ſo different an opinion, that, after a variety of ill-grounded ſtrictures on this piece, he ſays, " Surely no man could " have fancied that he read Lycidas with " pleaſure, had he not known its au- " thor [81]."

He appears to have had a very unreaſonable and ill-founded averſion to blank-verſe, and a great diſlike to paſtoral poetry. He had, indeed, little taſte for rural ſcenes [82]: and when he travelled through France with Mr. Thrale, would not even look out of the windows of the carriage, to view the face of the country [83]; and ſeemed to think

[81] Life of Milton, p. 157. [82] Vid. Boſwell, p. 119.
[83] Anecdotes, p. 99, 109.

the

the moſt pleaſing proſpects unworthy of his attention. Such a man, therefore, could not be expected to have a very high reliſh for thoſe poetical compoſitions, in which the beauties of nature are deſcribed; nor could it reaſonably be expected, that of ſuch compoſitions he would be a judicious and impartial critic.

His life of Dr. Watts is written with great candour; and, perhaps, he might be the more inclined to do juſtice to that ingenious divine, though a Diſſenter, not only from reſpect for his piety, but alſo from ſome grateful remembrance of the aſſiſtance which he had received from his works, in the compilation of his Dictionary. He has many quotations from Watts, and has incorporated into his Dictionary not a few of the definitions which occur in the Logic of that writer. Mr. Courtenay, in the notes to his "Poetical Review of the

" literary and moral character of Dr. " Johnſon," has given eight lines from Watts's poems, as a ſufficient ſpecimen to enable the reader to judge of his poetical merit. But ſurely to ſelect a few of the worſt lines of an author, who wrote ſo much as Dr. Watts did, is not a very candid method of eſtimating his merit. If Mr. Courtenay, inſtead of the lines which he has ſelected, had given Dr. Watts's ode to lady Sunderland, its elegance and beauty would have been acknowledged by every reader of taſte.

THE life of Dr. YOUNG, which is inſerted among Dr. Johnſon's biographical prefaces, but of which he was avowedly not the author, is not favourably written. There is in it much zeal for the honour of Dr. Young's ſon, who appears, indeed, to have been injuriouſly treated; but too little regard for the honour of the father. Young

had

had great weakneſſes; but he had alſo conſiderable virtues, and great literary merit. In the life, however, which is given of him in this collection, his foibles are much more laborioufly diſplayed than his excellencies. Young is, indeed, juſtly cenſured for the many inſtances of adulation which occur in his writings; and his anxiety for preferment was unworthy of his character. But, in other reſpects, he is treated with too much ſeverity; and his great work, the NIGHT THOUGHTS, ſurely deſerved to ſpoken of in better terms than thoſe of "the mournful, angry, gloomy NIGHT "THOUGHTS [84]." In juſtice to the writer of the life of Young, it ſhould, however, be obſerved, that in other places he ſtiles the Night Thoughts "extraordinary poems," and "ornaments to our language;" and that in ſome parts of this life the ſtyle and

[84] Life of Young, p. 39.

manner of Johnſon are very happily imitated.

The principal fault of Johnſon, as a biographical writer, ſeems to have been, too great a propenſity to introduce injurious reflections againſt men of reſpectable character, and to ſtate facts unfavourable to their memory, on ſlight and inſufficient grounds. Biographical writers in general are charged with the contrary fault, too great a partiality in favour of the perſons whoſe lives they undertake to relate. Impartiality ſhould certainly be aimed at; and the truth ſhould be given, when it can be obtained. But truth, at leaſt the whole truth, is often not attainable; and, in doubtful caſes, candour and equity ſeem to dictate, that it is beſt to err on the favourable ſide. No benefit can be derived to the intereſts either of virtue, or of learning,

learning, from injurious repreſentations of men eminent for genius and literature.

NOTWITHSTANDING the errors, and inſtances of partiality and miſrepreſentation, which occaſionally occur in the Lives of the Poets, they contain ſo many accurate and juſt obſervations on human nature, ſuch original and curious remarks on various literary ſubjects, and abound with ſo many beauties of ſtyle, that they cannot be peruſed by any reader of taſte without a great degree of pleaſure. Beſides their general merit as compoſitions, they alſo contain many particular paſſages of diſtinguiſhed excellence. The character of Gilbert Walmſley, in the life of Edmund Smith, is finely drawn; the account, in the life of Addiſon, of the riſe and progreſs of the Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian, and of the effects produced by thoſe admirable eſſays on the manners of the nation, is juſt

and curious; and there are many excellent obſervations on the modes of ſtudy, and on literary compoſition.

Besides the works already enumerated, Dr. Johnſon was alſo the author of many ſmall pieces, ſome of which were re-printed in Davies's collection of "Miſcellaneous "and Fugitive pieces." Among theſe are his preface to the Preceptor, and the lives of Roger Aſcham, Peter Burman, and ſir Thomas Browne. The Viſion of Theodore, the hermit of Teneriffe, which was firſt publiſhed in the Preceptor, and which is alſo preſerved in this collection, is a beautiful and inſtructive allegory. Indeed, all theſe pieces have conſiderable merit; and his Latin compoſitions, which have appeared in different publications, are elegant and claſſical.

His "Review of Dr. Blackwell's Me-"moirs of the Court of Auguſtus," which

is

is printed in Davies's collection, is written with great aſperity. Blackwell's ſtyle, was, indeed, in ſome reſpects, liable to juſt exceptions; but it ſeems ſufficiently evident, that the high ſentiments of liberty, which are diſplayed in Blackwell's book, was a principal cauſe of the extreme ſeverity with which Johnſon treated him. The "Diſſertation on the Epitaphs of "Pope," contains many juſt obſervations; but few compoſitions of this kind will ſtand the teſt of ſo rigorous a mode of criticiſm.

It has been lately obſerved, by Mr. Courtenay[85], that "the papers in the "Adventurer, ſigned with the letter T, "are commonly attributed to one of Dr. "Johnſon's earlieſt and moſt intimate "friends, Dr. Bathurſt; but there is

[85] Literary and Moral Character of Dr. Johnſon, p. 20.

"good

" good reaſon to believe that they were " written by Dr. Johnſon, and given by " him to his friend[86]." And, indeed, ſome of the papers in the Adventurer, marked T, contain ſuch ſtrong internal evidence of their being the productions of Johnſon, particularly numbers 45, 58, 69, 74, 84, 85, 95, 99, 102, 108, 111, 115, 119, 128, 131, 137, and 138, that I have not the leaſt doubt but that they were really written by him[87]; and they have

[86] Mr. Courtenay, however, adds, that " at that " time Dr. Johnſon was himſelf engaged in writing " the RAMBLER, and could ill afford to make a " preſent of his labours." But in this particular this ingenious writer is miſtaken. The ADVENTURER was not publiſhed till ſome time after a period was put to the publication of the RAMBLER in numbers.

[87] Since this Eſſay was firſt publiſhed, it has been aſcertained, by Mr. Boſwell, that the Adventurers, marked T, were really written by Dr. Johnſon; or at leaſt dictated by him.

always

always appeared to me to be ſome of the beſt eſſays in this valuable collection.

Dr. Johnſon has been repreſented as a man of little reading. Had this been true, the obſervation of Churchill would have been juſt, that "he could not have been "the author of the works which are at-"tributed to him." Mr. Tyers, to whom he was well known, ſays, that "he knew "all that books could tell him [88]." This is a ſtrong expreſſion; but it is manifeſt from his writings, that his reading muſt have been extenſive. The ſame gentleman alſo ſays, that "with French authors he "was familiar [89];" and Mrs. Piozzi remarks, that "he was a great reader of "French literature [90]." We learn likewiſe from that lady, that in the latter part of his life, when he probably read leſs

[88] Biographical Sketch, p. 25. [89] Ibid.

[90] Anecdotes, p. 283.

"than

than in his earlier years, reading in bed "was his conſtant cuſtom[91]." He ſeems ſometimes to have ſpoken in low terms of his own acquiſitions, from his high ideas of the powers of the human mind, and of the great intellectual attainments that might be made by induſtry and perſeverance.

THE particulars that are related, with reſpect to the celerity with which he compoſed his pieces, ſeem hardly credible. They appear, however, to be well atteſted[92]; and, if they are only nearly true, they imply an energy of mind, and a rapidity of compoſition, that are very extraordinary and uncommon.

INSTANCES of conſiderable inconſiſtency were ſometimes diſcoverable in Dr. Johnſon's converſation, and in his writings.

[91] Ibid. p. 237.

[92] Vid. Piozzi's Anecdotes, p. 41, 48, 201. Boſwell's Tour, p. 65. Tyers's Biographical Sketch, p. 27.

In

In London, he was an advocate for treating children with great indulgence [93]; and in Scotland, he contended for treating them with ſeverity [94]. He maintained in converſation one day, that no child was better than another, but by difference of inſtruction; and two days after, that "we inherit diſpoſitions from our parents [95]." In his life of Pope, ſpeaking of his private edition of Bolingbroke's Patriot King, he obſerves in one place, that "Warburton "ſuppoſes, with great appearance of rea"ſon, that the irregularity of his conduct "proceeded wholly from his zeal for Bo"lingbroke [96], who might perhaps have "deſtroyed the pamphlet, which Pope "thought it his duty to preſerve, even

[93] Piozzi, p. 21, 22. [94] Boſwell, p. 103.
[95] Ibid. p. 258.
[96] This appears to have been the real motive of Pope's conduct in this tranſaction.

"without

"without its author's approbation[97]:" and in another place he ſays, that Pope's private impreſſion of Bolingbroke's work "muſt have proceeded from his general "habit of ſecrecy and cunning; he caught "an opportunity of a ſly trick, and pleaſed "himſelf with the thought of outwitting "Bolingbroke[98]." In his life of Milton, he treats with great ridicule the idea, that ſome ſeaſons of the year are more favourable to compoſition than others[99]; and yet it is obſervable, that he ſays in his Meditations, 'Between Eaſter and Whit-'ſuntide, having ALWAYS CONSIDERED 'THAT TIME AS PROPITIOUS TO STUDY, 'I attempted to learn the Low Dutch 'language[100].'

IT is a circumſtance ſomewhat ſingular, that GEORGE PSALMANAZAR, many years

[97] Life of Pope, p. 219. [98] Ibid. p. 230.
[99] P. 102, 103, 105. [100] P. 123.

of

of whoſe life were paſſed in a courſe of deceit and impoſture, ſhould have been ſpoken of by Dr. Johnſon as "the beſt "man he had ever known [101]." But that this was his real ſentiment, appears not only from the teſtimony of Mrs. Piozzi, but alſo from his Meditations [102]. Pſalmanazar was, indeed, evidently a real penitent; and many of the latter years of his life appear to have been paſſed in a very conſcientious adherence to the rules of piety and virtue.

It is related by Mr. Boſwell, that Dr. Johnſon once ſaid, that "he believed "hardly any man died without affecta-"tion [103]." When he made this declaration, he ſeems to have been influenced by his own habitual dread of death, which was certainly beyond what men ordinarily

[101] Anecdotes, p. 173. [102] P. 96.

[103] Tour to the Hebrides, p. 500.

experi-

experience. There can be no reaſonable doubt, but that men of great and noble minds have often died, even on public ſcaffolds, and eſpecially in cauſes of the juſtice of which they were fully perſuaded, with firmneſs, and even with chearfulneſs, without affectation. It is diſhonourable to human nature, and injurious to ſome of the moſt illuſtrious characters that ever exiſted, to ſuppoſe otherwiſe.

In recording Dr. Johnſon's ſentiments concerning Mr. Hume, of whom he had formed a very ill opinion, Mr. Boſwell has made ſome juſt animadverſions on the character given of that celebrated writer by Dr. Adam Smith [104]. It is ſurely extraordinary that Mr. Hume ſhould be repreſented "as approaching as nearly to the "idea of a perfectly wiſe and virtuous man "as perhaps the nature of human frailty

[104] Tour, p. 21, 22, 23.

"will

" will permit." In ſupport of this high encomium, no proper evidence has ever been produced by Dr. Smith, nor by any other of Mr. Hume's friends and admirers. He might be a man of polite manners, a chearful and agreeable companion, be equitable in his dealings with others, and occaſionally charitable to the poor; he might view the approach of death with compoſure and tranquility; he might be poſſeſſed of all the virtues that his friends attribute to him; and yet be very far inferior to many characters, which have appeared among the profeſſors of Chriſtianity. Nor is there the leaſt reaſonable doubt but that this was really the caſe. Many men have been found among Chriſtians, as much ſuperior to Mr. Hume in virtue, as in rectitude of ſentiment. Of Mr. Hume's fortitude in adverſity, of great generoſity diſplayed by him, or of any uncommon be-

nevolence, no inſtances are recorded: but theſe virtues have been eminently and illuſtriouſly conſpicuous in many Chriſtian characters. If the character of DAVID HUME be compared with that of BERNARD GILPIN, a country clergyman, or with that of THOMAS FIRMIN, a tradeſman of London, but both acting under the influence of the great truths of Chriſtianity, the ſtriking inferiority of this celebrated ſceptic will be apparent to every impartial man. Theſe men were not merely of gentle and inoffenſive manners, and of a mild and placid deportment; but they were diſtinguiſhed by active and exemplary virtue, their minds were ardently engaged in the promotion of the happineſs of their fellow creatures, and in their labours for this purpoſe they were indefatigable. But theſe men were formed by the ſublime views of Chriſtianity;

Chriſtianity; and ſuch men were never produced by ſcepticiſm or infidelity.

HAVING made this digreſſion, I ſhall again return to Dr. Johnſon, who is the principal ſubject of the preſent Eſſay.

HE could not endure even a tolerable degree of moderation in a writer, when political characters or topics were the ſubject of diſcuſſion. He ſpoke of Mr. Granger in abuſive terms to Mr. Boſwell, as being a Whig [105]; though the fact was, that if Mr. Granger, with whom I was perſonally acquainted, had any political prejudices, they were rather on the Tory ſide. But Mr. Granger was a very amiable man, and poſſeſſed much candour and ingenuouſneſs of diſpoſition. He was, therefore, inclined to do juſtice to thoſe who differed from him, either in politics or in religion; and this moderation led him to ſpeak well

[105] Tour to the Hebrides, p. 312.

of reſpectable characters of different ſects and parties. It was this impartiality which gave offence to Dr. Johnſon.

THE ſtyle of Johnſon appeared ſuited to his peculiar character, and mode of thinking. It ſeems too learned for common readers; and, on the firſt publication of his Ramblers, many complaints were made of the frequent recurrence of hard words in thoſe eſſays. It was with a view to this accuſation againſt him, that he wrote that eſſay in the Idler, which contains a defence of the uſe of hard words, and in which he remarks, that "every author does not "write for every reader." He was not ambitious of illiterate readers, and was willing to reſign them to thoſe writers whoſe productions were better adapted to their capacities. "Difference of thoughts," ſays he, "will produce difference of "language. He that thinks with more

"extent

" extent than another will want words of " larger meaning. He that thinks with " more ſubtilty will ſeek for terms of more " nice diſcrimination." It is certain, that paſſages ſometimes occur in his writings, which are not very intelligible to ordinary readers. Thus, in the preface to his Dictionary, he puts the following queſtion: " When the radical idea branches out into " parallel ramifications, how can a conſe- " cutive ſeries be formed of ſenſes in their " nature collateral?"

He was occaſionally fond of antitheſis and of alliteration; and his periods are ſometimes too artificial, and his phraſes too remote from the ordinary idiom of our language. But notwithſtanding the peculiarity of his ſtyle, he has ſeldom made uſe of words not to be found in preceding writers. " When common words," ſays he, " were leſs pleaſing to the ear, or leſs

" diſtinct in their ſignification, I have fa-
" miliarized the terms of philoſophy by
" applying them to known objects and
" popular ideas; but have rarely admitted
" any word not authorized by former
" writers." He conſidered himſelf as having contributed to the improvement of the Engliſh language. He ſays in his laſt Rambler, " I have laboured to refine our
" language to grammatical purity, and
" to clear it from colloquial barbariſms,
" licentious idioms, and irregular combi-
" nations. Something, perhaps, I have
" added to the elegance of its conſtruction,
" and ſomething to the harmony of its
" cadence." Whatever may be the faults of his ſtyle, it has certainly great ſtrength and great dignity, and his periods are often highly poliſhed; and, perhaps, it would be difficult to point out any of his contempo-

temporaries, by whom the Engliſh language was written with equal energy.

When the great intellectual powers that Dr. Johnſon poſſeſſed are conſidered, and the rapidity with which he finiſhed his compoſitions, when he could prevail on himſelf to ſit down to write, little doubt can be entertained, but that he might have produced much more than he did; and it was probably this conſciouſneſs that occaſioned his frequent ſelf-reproaches. The works, however, that he did produce, were very conſiderable, and ſuch as will undoubtedly ſecure to him a great and laſting reputation.

In June, 1783, he had a paralytic ſtroke, which deprived him for a conſiderable time of his ſpeech; but he afterwards completely recovered. He was, however, towards the cloſe of his life, attacked by the gout, and by a dropſy. He died on

the 13th of December, 1784, in the ſeventy-fifth year of his age. He was interred in Weſtminſter-abbey, and a monument has ſince been erected to his memory in St. Paul's cathedral.

With a ſlight ſketch of ſome of the principal features of his character, I ſhall conclude this Eſſay.

He poſſeſſed extraordinary powers of underſtanding, which were much cultivated by ſtudy, and ſtill more by meditation and reflection. His memory was remarkably retentive, his imagination uncommonly vigorous, and his judgment keen and penetrating. He had a ſtrong ſenſe of the importance of religion; his piety was ſincere, and ſometimes ardent; and his zeal for the intereſts of virtue was often manifeſted in his converſation and in his writings. The ſame energy, which

was

was diſplayed in his literary productions, was exhibited alſo in his converſation, which was various, ſtriking, and inſtructive; and, perhaps, no man ever equalled him for nervous and pointed repartees.

THE great originality which ſometimes appeared in his conceptions, and the perſpicuity and force with which he delivered them, greatly enhanced the value of his converſation; and the remarks that he delivered received additional weight from the ſtrength of his voice, and the ſolemnity of his manner. He was conſcious of his own ſuperiority; and, when in company with literary men, or with thoſe with whom there was any poſſibility of rivalſhip or competition, this conſciouſneſs was too apparent. With inferiors, and thoſe who readily admitted all his claims, he was often mild and gentle; but to others, ſuch was often the arrogance of his manners, that

that the endurance of it required no ordinary degree of patience. He was very dextrous at argumentation; and, when his reaſonings were not ſolid, they were at leaſt artful and plauſible. His retorts were ſo powerful, that his friends and acquaintance were generally cautious of entering the liſts againſt him; and the ready acquieſcence, of thoſe with whom he aſſociated, in his opinions and aſſertions, probably rendered him more dogmatic than he might otherwiſe have been. With thoſe, however, whom he loved, and with whom he was familiar, he was ſometimes chearful and ſprightly, and ſometimes indulged himſelf in ſallies of wit and pleaſantry. He ſpent much of his time, eſpecially in his latter years, in converſation; and ſeems to have had ſuch an averſion to being left without company, as was ſomewhat extraordinary in a man poſſeſſed of ſuch intellectual

tellectual powers, and whoſe underſtanding had been ſo highly cultivated.

He ſometimes diſcovered much impetuoſity and irritability of temper, and was too ready to take offence at others; but when conceſſions were made, he was eaſily appeaſed. For thoſe from whom he had received kindneſs in the earlier part of his life, he ſeemed ever to retain a particular regard, and manifeſted much gratitude towards thoſe by whom he had at any time been benefited. He was ſoon offended with pertneſs, or ignorance: but he ſometimes ſeemed to be conſcious of having anſwered the queſtions of others with too much roughneſs; and was then deſirous to diſcover more gentleneſs of temper, and to communicate information with more ſuavity of manners[106]. When not under the influence of perſonal pique, of pride,

[106] Vid. Piozzi's Anecdotes, p. 96, 97.

or

or of religious or political prejudices, he ſeems to have had great ardour of benevolence; and, on ſome occaſions, he gave very ſignal proofs of generoſity and humanity.

He was naturally melancholy, and his views of human life appear to have been habitually gloomy. This appears in his Rasselas, and in many paſſages of his writings. It was alſo a ſtriking part of the character of Dr. Johnſon, that with powers of mind that did honour to human nature, he had weakneſſes and prejudices that ſeemed ſuited only to the loweſt of the ſpecies. His piety was ſtrongly tinctured with ſuperſtition; and we are aſtoniſhed to find the author of the Rambler expreſſing ſerious concern, becauſe he had put milk into his tea on a Good Friday [107]. His cuſtom of praying for the dead, though unſupported by reaſon or by ſcripture, was

[107] Meditations, p. 140.

a leſs

a leſs irrational ſuperſtition. Indeed, one of the great features of Johnſon's character, was a degree of bigotry, both in politics and in religion, which is now ſeldom to be met with in perſons of a cultivated underſtanding. Few other men could have been found, in the preſent age, whoſe political bigotry would have led them to ſtyle the celebrated JOHN HAMPDEN "the "zealot of rebellion"[108]; and the religious bigotry of the man, who, when at Edinburgh, would not go to hear Dr. Robertſon preach, becauſe he would not be preſent at a Preſbyterian aſſembly, is not eaſily to be paralleled in this age, and in this country. His habitual incredulity with reſpect to facts, of which there was no reaſonable ground for doubt, as ſtated by Mrs. Piozzi[109], and which was re-

[108] Life of Waller, p. 1.

[109] Anecdotes, p. 140.

marked

marked by Hogarth [110], was alſo a ſingular trait in his character; and eſpecially when contraſted with his ſuperſtitious credulity on other occaſions. To the cloſe of life, he was not only occupied in forming ſchemes of religious reformation, but even to a very late period of it, he ſeems to have been ſolicitous to apply himſelf to ſtudy with renewed diligence and vigour. It is remarkable, that, in his ſixty-fourth year, he attempted to learn the Low Dutch language [111]; and, in his ſixty-ſeventh year, he made a reſolution to apply himſelf "vigorouſly to ſtudy, particularly of "the Greek and Italian tongues [112]."

The faults and the foibles of JOHNSON, whatever they were, are now deſcended with him to the grave; but his virtues ſhould be the object of our imitation. His

[110] Ibid. p. 137. [111] Meditations, p. 123.
[112] Ibid. p. 145.

works,

works, with all their defects, are a moſt valuable and important acceſſion to the literature of England. His political writings will probably be little read, on any other account than for the dignity and energy of his ſtyle; but his Dictionary, his moral eſſays, and his productions in polite literature, will convey uſeful inſtruction, and elegant entertainment, as long as the language in which they are written ſhall be underſtood; and give him a juſt claim to a diſtinguiſhed rank among the beſt and ableſt writers that England has produced.

INDEX

INDEX

TO THE

THREE VOLUMES.

A.

ADDISON, Joseph, remarks on Johnſon's Life of him, vol. III. p. 390, 391, 392. obſervations relative to the quarrel between him and Pope, 395, 398.

Allybone, Judge, the infamous doctrine, concerning libels, laid down by him in the reign of James the Second, II. 71, 72, 73.

American colonies, Dr. Johnſon's obſervations concerning the claims of the Britiſh government reſpecting them, I. 192—196.

American war, remarks relative to it, and to its termination, I. 194, 195, 196. II. 109. III. 233, 234.

Articles of the Church of England, obſervations concerning them, II. 276—314.

Aſaph, Dean of, account of the proſecution againſt him, II. 128—136.

INDEX.

Aſſociations formed in England, in the reign of George III. againſt the Freedom of the Preſs, and the Freedom of Converſation, III. 216, 217, 218, 219, 222, 253, 254, 255, &c.

Aylmer, John, biſhop of London, his account of the nature of the Engliſh government, I. 308, 309.

B.

Balance of Europe, the preſervation of it ſometimes made a pretence for an improper, impolitic, and unjuſt interference in the internal government of other nations, III. 40, 41, 42, 48, 49, 179.

Barillon, Monſ. his character of Algernon Sydney, II. 243, 244, 246, 247.

Baxter, Richard, proſecuted for a libel, II. 94, 95.

Bernardiſton, ſir Samuel, nature of the proſecution againſt him, II. 93, 94.

Biſhops, in Ireland, lord Strafford's opinion of the probability of their courtly tractability, I. 376.

Blackwell, Dr. his Memoirs of the Court of Auguſtus criticiſed by Johnſon with too much aſperity, I. 169, 170.

BLACKSTONE, Judge, extracts from him, I. 83, 84. II. 30, 31. and obſervations relative to him, II. 44, 45.

Britons, antient, their forms of government, I. 247, 248, 249, 250.

BOSWELL, JAMES, particulars related by him concerning Dr. Johnſon, III. 315, 319, 320, 328, 347. he accompanies him to the Hebrides, 357. his account of that journey, 358.

BUCHANAN, GEORGE, his ideas of the neceſſity of limiting regal prerogative by law, I. 125, 126.

Bullet, Sir Francis, one of the Judges of the Court of King's Bench, the modeſty exhibited by him in a Libel Cauſe, when ſitting as a ſingle judge at Niſi Prius, II. 132.

BURKE, EDMUND, remarks on his Reflections on the Revolution in France, III. 73. his miſrepreſentations of the nature and proceedings of the Society for Conſtitutional Information, 75, 76. his reverence for Chivalry, 99, 101. his extraordinary repreſentations of the ſuppoſed conſequences of the French revolution, 127, 128. his ill founded ſtatements of the circumſtances which attended the Engliſh revolution, 139—154. his myſterious repreſentation of the nature of government, 163. his ideas of kings and courts, 212, 213. farther extracts from his ſpeeches and writings, 233, 234.

C.

Charles I. obſervations concerning the tranſactions of his reign, I. 344, 345, 346, 347. II. 183—199. III. 351, 372. the Earl of Strafford's letters to him, I. 374—381.

Charles II. the criminality of his conduct palliated by Hume, I. 396—403.

CHRISTIANITY, the principles of it not favourable to a deſpotic government, I. 116, 117. its doctrines will admit the fulleſt and freeſt inveſtigation, II. 334. its general tendency, 347, 348, 386, 387, 420.

Civil Government, Mr. Locke's ſtatement of its nature, I. 40, 41.

Civil Liberty, Mr. Locke's definition of it, I. 43, 44.

Coke, Sir Edward, his account of the origin of the ſtate of villenage, I. 77. farther extracts from him, I. 175, 254. II. 86, 87. obſervations on his character, II. 91, 92.

Corke, Earl of, his evidence againſt the Earl of Strafford at his trial, I. 360, 361, 362.

Corruption of Parliament, by the executive power, the iniquity of it, I. 133, 134, 135.

Creeds and Articles of Faith, unfavourable to the promotion of truth, and to the intereſts of genuine Chriſtianity, II. 327, 328.

Crown Lawyers, their dexterity in prevailing on Juries to ſubmit to a diminution of their power and importance, II. 10. the doctrines laid down by them, in Libel cauſes, inconſiſtent with the principles of freedom, and obtruded as law without any legitimate origin, 98, 99, 100.

Crown and Anchor Aſſociation, origin of that ſociety, III. 250. remarks on its proceedings and publications, 253—297.

D.

Dalrymple, Sir John, remarks on the charges brought by him againſt Lord William Ruſſel and Algernon Sydney, II. 215—271.

Delamer, Lord, remarks relative to his political conduct and character, II. 260, 261.

De Foe, Daniel, tried for the publication of a libel, II. 105. his character, 105, 106.

E.

Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhments, Mr. Hume's hypotheſis concerning them, I. 330, 331, 332.

Elizabeth, Queen, Mr. Hume's erroneous ſtatements of the ideas concerning government prevalent in the reign of that princeſs, I. 306—312.

Elliot, Sir John, his character, II. 256, 257.

Erskine, Thomas, defends the cauſe of the dean of St. Aſaph, and that of John Stockdale, with great ſpirit and ability, II. 131, 132, 146, 147. ſupports Mr. Fox's Libel Bill, 167.

Equality, doctrine of, Mr. Locke's remarks on that ſubject, I. 92, 93. obſervations relative to it by the Duke of Richmond, III. 203, 204. and by the Biſhop of Landaff, 203.

Eſtabliſhed governments, not in danger of being overturned merely from ſpeculative opinions, I. 48.

Exciſe, pernicious tendency of that mode of taxation, III. 17, 18, 19.

F.

Filmer, Sir Robert, his miſrepreſentations of the principles of liberty ſimilar to thoſe of Dean Tucker, I. 43.

Fleming, Dr. his character, II. 427—430.

Forteſcue, Sir John, his account of the general ſtate and condition of the inhabitants of England in his time, I. 78, 79, 80.

Fox, Charles James, brings in a bill for removing doubts reſpecting the functions of Juries in caſes of Libel, II. 166, 167.

France, ſtate of that kingdom, and its inhabitants, before the late Revolution, III. 109, 110.

Freedom of the Press, its importance, II. 4, 164. III. 94, 193, 194, 261.

French principles, from whence ſome of the principles, which have been ſo denominated, derived their origin, III. 205, 206, 207, 208.

G.

Garraway, Sir Henry, lord-mayor of London, his evidence againſt the Earl of Strafford, I. 368.

George II. the king of Pruſſia's ſtatement of the principles on which he governed England, III. 39.

George III. the great increaſe, in his reign, of the Exciſe, III. 17. and of the Peerage, 66. the loſs, during the ſame period, of the American colonies, 234, 235.

German alliances, naturally adapted to involve Great Britain in unneceſſary and deſtructive continental wars, III. 33, 34, 35, 36.

Gordon, Thomas, his obſervation on the connection between the freedom of ſpeech and the ſecurity of property, III. 261, 262.

Gourville, Monſ. his obſervation reſpecting the kings of England, III. 161, 162.

H.

Hale, Sir Matthew, extracts from him, II. 18, 24, 25, 26.

Hamilton, Andrew, his able defence of John Peter Zenger, II. 124.

HAMPDEN, JOHN, Mr. Hume's injurious repreſentation of his character, I. 352, 353, 354.

Hawles, Sir John, his obſervations concerning the power of Juries, II. 19, 20, 21, 22.

Henry VII. his character and conduct, I. 297, 298.

Henry VIII. obſervations relative to his character and adminiſtration, I. 298, 299. aſſumes an appearance of humility in one of his ſpeeches to the parliament, 303, 304.

Holland, impropriety and injuſtice of the Britiſh adminiſtration uniting with Pruſſia, to interfere in the diſputes between that republic and the ſtadtholder, III. 46—50.

HORNE, JOHN, tried in the court of King's Bench for the publication of two libels, II. 107, 108, 109. his able and ſpirited defence, 110, 112.

HUME, DAVID, remarks on his Hiſtory of England, I. 237, 238. affects ſingularity of ſentiment, 239. wrote under the influence of prejudice, 240. ſuperficially acquainted with the earlier periods of the Britiſh hiſtory, 243. takes pleaſure in degrading the national character of the inhabitants of England, 244, 245. was inclined to repreſent the government of England as in an high degree arbitrary, in the periods preceding the acceſſion of the houſe of Stuart, from his deſire of vindicating, or extenuating, the tyranny of that family, 246. his miſrepreſentation of the ſentiments of the nation reſpecting government in the reign of queen Elizabeth,

306, 307, 308. his injurious account of the firſt reformers, 317. and of John Hampden, 352, 353. his partial account of the character, conduct, and trial of the Earl of Strafford, 355—381. his palliation of the moſt cenſurable actions of Archbiſhop Laud, 382. and of the general adminiſtration of Charles I. 387—392. other inſtances of his partiality, 397, 401, 403. labours to leſſen the reputation of ſome of the moſt celebrated Engliſh writers, 407—417. general remarks on his character as an hiſtorian, 421—426.

Hurd, Biſhop, his obſervations on the nature of the Engliſh government, after the acceſſion of William the Norman, I. 255, 256.

Hyde, Edward, afterwards Earl of Clarendon, his ſpeech againſt the arbitrary proceedings of the court and council of the North, I. 358, 359. his account of the infamous conduct of the judges in the caſe of Ship Money, II. 67, 68, 69.

I.

James I. Hume's ſtatement of the felicity of his reign, I. 339.

Impreſſing Seamen, remarks relative to that practice, I. 90, 91. III. 30, 31, 32, 33.

JOHNSON, SAMUEL, Chaplain to Lord Ruſſel, his character, II. 262, 263.

JOHNSON, Dr. SAMUEL, remarks on ſeveral of his political tracts, I. 151—209. the language employed by him, in ſpeaking of thoſe whoſe political opinions were different from his own, 157, 158, 162,

162, 163. eſtimate of his character, III. 302, 303, 307, 308, 309, &c. particulars of his early life, 319, 320. account of his earlier publications, 323, 324, &c. publiſhes his Rambler, 331, and his Dictionary, 335. obſervations on ſome of his other works, 342—356. he viſits the Hebrides, in company with Mr. Boſwell, 357. his death, 423, farther obſervations on his character, 424—439.

Jones, Sir William, a political dialogue written by him made the ſubject of a proſecution, II. 128, 129. remarks relative to his character, 137—140.

Jortin, Dr. his obſervation concerning the Liturgy and Articles of the Church of England, II. 299.

Irene, tragedy of, by Johnſon, obſervations concerning it, III. 328, 329, 330.

Italy, Algernon Sydney's repreſentation of the different ſtates of it when poſſeſſed of freedom, and when under the preſent arbitrary modes of government, I. 51, 52, 53.

Judges, lord Strafford recommends ſeaſonable rewards to be given them, for occaſional ſervices to the crown, I. 376.

Judges, remarks on their anſwers to ſeven queſtions put to them by the houſe of peers, concerning the functions of juries, and the law of Libels, II. 169.

Jurymen, their knowledge of their rights and their duty, and their firmneſs in maintaining their privileges, of great importance to the intereſts of public freedom, II. 5, 8, 12, 40, 41, 161.

K.

Keach, Benjamin, account of the profecution againſt him, II. 95, 96.

Kenyon, Lloyd, Chief Juſtice of Cheſter, his obſervations reſpecting the appointment of Sir William Jones to be one of the judges in Bengal, II. 137, 138. when raiſed to the peerage, and chief juſtice of the King's bench, oppoſes Mr. Fox's Libel bill, 167, 170.

Kings, their perſonal intereſts not to be preferred to the welfare of nations, I. 109. the adulation, with which they are frequently treated, diſgraceful to human nature, III. 100, 101.

L.

Lambert, John, ſome account of him, I. 325, 326, 333, 335.

Legiſlative power, the nature of it, and the duties of thoſe by whom it is exerciſed, I. 129, 130, 131, 132.

Libels, doctrines concerning them laid down by various law writers, II. 83—91.

Libels, the extraordinary doctrines laid down by crown lawyers reſpecting the province of juries, in trials for writing or printing publications ſo termed, II. 9, 10, 55, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76. the abſurdity of ſome of theſe doctrines, 49, 50, 52.

Liberty, the prevalence of its principles eſſential to the glory and to the proſperity of Great Britain, III. 297, 298.

Lilburne, John, particulars relative to his trial, II. 34, 35.
Literature, too highly taxed in England, III. 70.
Locke, John, his political principles misrepresented by Dean Tucker, I. 9. his principles vindicated, 11. his definition of liberty, 43, 44. his account of the origin of civil government, 66, 67. the design and tendency of his Treatise on Government, 121—140. his character, 141, 142.
London, elections for members of parliament in that city attended with less disorder than many country elections, I. 29, 30.
Luther, Martin, his conduct in the promotion of the Reformation misrepresented by Hume, I. 316.
Lyttelton, Lord, his observations relative to the antient government of the Britons, I. 250, 251.

M.

Magna Charta, observations relative to it, I. 267, 268, 275.
Mansfield, Earl of, chief justice of the King's Bench, his partiality in causes between the crown and the subject, II. 172.
Milton, vindicated from the attacks made against him by Mr. Hume, I. 416, 417. and by Dr. Johnson, III. 361—385.
Morality, the promotion of the practice of it one great design of Christianity, II. 340, 341, 343, 347, 348, &c.
Murphy, Mr. remarks on his Essay on the Life and Genius of Dr. Johnson, III. 348, 349, 350, 351.
Murray, Alexander, particulars relative to the prosecution

ecution for the publication of his Appeal to the people of Great Britain, II. 140—146.

Myſtery, in law, not introduced into it with any good views, or for any good purpoſes, II. 52, 53.

N.

News-carriers, the unceaſing labour, attention, and vigilance, required of them by the Crown and Anchor aſſociation, III. 267—270.

NOWELL, Dr. remarks on a ſermon preached by him before the univerſity of Oxford, II. 178—210.

O.

Owen, William, his trial in the court of King's Bench, for the publication of a libel, II. 140—146.

P.

PARADISE LOST, Mr. Hume's obſervations concerning that poem, I. 415, 416. Dr. Johnſon's character of it, III. 389.

Parliaments, their deſign, I. 23. the meanneſs, with which they ſometimes ſuffer themſelves to be dictated to, by miniſters of ſtate, diſgraceful to themſelves, and treacherous to their conſtituents, I. 202. III. 23, 24.

Parliament, the corruption of it, by the executive power, by the prince, or his agents, in the higheſt degree criminal, and involves in it a diſſolution of the government, I. 133, 134, 135. ſuch corruption of

of it not to be juſtified by any pretences of political expediency, 226.

Parliament, members of, antiently paid particular attention to the inſtructions of their conſtituents, I. 175.

PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION, the ſtate of it in England partial and inadequate, I. 24, 172, 173. the evils reſulting from this, III. 27, 28, 29. 30.

Petition of Right, Mr. Hume's account of the effects produced by the royal aſſent being given to the act ſo called, I. 350, 351.

Piozzi, Mrs. remarks relative to that lady's account of Dr. Johnſon, III. 303, 304, 314, 318, 319.

PITT, WILLIAM, Earl of Chatham, Dr. Johnſon's obſervation concerning him, I. 160. farther particulars relative to him, III. 23, 42.

Pitt, William, the younger, Chancellor of the Exchequer, makes profeſſions of great zeal for a Parliamentary Reform, III. 27. totally changes his language on that ſubject, 28, 29. oppoſes bills in favour of the liberty of the people, and promotes arbitrary laws, 50, 51. exerts his influence in the extenſion of the exciſe, 17, 52. farther obſervations relative to his character and adminiſtration, 46, 47, 49, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 67, 68, 227, 228.

Political ſermons, obſervations concerning them, III. 171, 172, 173.

Political communities, men have a right to ſeparate themſelves from thoſe in which they are oppreſſed, or

or in which they believe themſelves to be unhappy, I. 60, 61.

POPE, ALEXANDER, remarks on Johnſon's Life of him, III. 395—398.

PRATT, CHARLES, Earl Camden, a defender of the rights of Juries, II. 127, 128. farther obſervations concerning him, 168.

Precedents, legal, Dean Swift's obſervations concerning them, II. 104.

PRICE, Dr. vindicated againſt the miſrepreſentations of Dr. Shebbeare, I. 218, 219, 220. his motion for a congratulatory addreſs to the National Aſſembly of France, III. 79, 80.

PRIESTLEY, Dr. vindicated againſt the miſrepreſentations of Dean Tucker, I. 14, 15, 16. extracts from his Eſſay on the firſt Principles of Government, 14, 58, 68, 69.

PRIOR, MATTHEW, his merits as a writer underrated by Johnſon, III. 393.

Property, not ſecured by an implicit ſubmiſſion to the meaſures of government, and an indiſcriminate ſupport of miniſters, I. 113, 114. III. 109, 191.

Proſecutions for public Libels, a readineſs to engage in them one of the ſtrongeſt preſumptions of evil deſigns in any miniſtry, II. 174.

Proteſtant Diſſenters, groſly miſrepreſented by Dr. Johnſon, I. 186, 187. by Dr. Shebbeare, I. 213, and by Dr. Nowell, II. 200, 201. vindicated, I. 231. II. 202.

Pſalmanazar, George, Johnſon's opinion of him, III. 414, 415.

Q.

Qualification Laws, remarks relative to their tendency, I. 102—107.

Quebec Act, vindicated by Dr. Johnſon, I. 178. obſervations relative to that act, 179—192.

R.

Raleigh, Sir Walter, his character injuriouſly treated by Mr. Hume, I. 340, 341, 342, 343.

RAMBLER, by Johnſon, obſervations relative to that collection of periodical eſſays, III. 331, 332, 333.

RASSELAS, HISTORY OF, by Johnſon, remarks on that work, III. 342, 343.

Reaſon, the free exerciſe of it ought to be admitted in the inveſtigation of religious truth, II. 330—337.

Reeves, John, Chairman of the Crown and Anchor Aſſociation, III. 276. offices under the crown held by him, 277. the houſe of commons paſs a vote againſt him, as the author or publiſher of a libel, 279. extracts from that publication, with remarks on it, 280, 281, 282, 283.

REFORMATION, THE, Mr. Hume's account of it extremely partial, and injurious to thoſe by whom it was chiefly promoted, I. 316—336.

Regency, remarks on the debates in parliament concerning it, in the reign of George the Third, III. 15, 16.

Republicans, ſome of the natural methods of increaſing their number, I. 109, 110.

Revenue laws, in framing them the convenience and accommodation of the ſubject too much neglected, III. 20, 21.

REVOLUTION IN ENGLAND, in 1688, obſervations concerning it, I. 95, 96. III. 147, 151, 152, 153.

REVOLUTION IN FRANCE, remarks relative to that event, I. 71. III. 8, 9, 11, 12, 79, 84, 86, 91, 237, 238.

Revolution Society, obſervations relative to its proceedings, III. 77—84.

Richard II. the account given by Mr. Hume of the reign of this prince extremely partial, I. 283—294.

Richmond, duke of, his ſentiments concerning Parliamentary Repreſentation, III. 204.

RUSSEL, Lord WILLIAM, vindicated from the charges brought againſt him by Sir John Dalrymple, II. 217—239.

S.

Saxons, obſervations concerning their mode of government, by Tyrrell and Nathaniel Bacon, I. 252.

Shafteſbury, firſt Earl of, his character injuriouſly treated by Mr. Hume, I. 399. obſervations concerning him, 400.

Shebbeare, Dr. his language reſpecting the popular party, the Americans, and the Diſſenters, I. 212, 213. his character of Biſhop Shipley, Biſhop Burnet, and Algernon Sydney, 214, 215.

SHERIDAN, RICHARD BRINSLEY, ſupports Mr. Fox's Libel Bill, II. 167. a member of the Society for Conſtitutional Information, III. 77.

Sixteenth Parliament of Great Britain, remarks relative to their tranſactions, III. 13, 15.

Skinner, Cyriac, ode addreſſed to him by Milton, on his blindneſs, I. 418.

Smith, Sir Thomas, his account of the power and buſineſs of Engliſh parliaments, I. 310, 311.

Smith, Adam, his character of David Hume, III. 416, 417.

Society for Conſtitutional Information, nature and deſign of that Society, III. 75, 76. vindicated from the miſrepreſentations of Mr. Burke, ibid.

Star Chamber, Court of, much of the law concerning Libels, laid down by modern lawyers, originally derived from that court, II. 90, 91.

Stockdale, John, proſecuted for the publication of a libel, 146. acquitted, 147. remarks on that proſecution, 148, 149.

Strafford, Earl of, Mr. Hume's partial account of his character, conduct, and trial, I. 355—372. his letters to king Charles I. 374—381.

Swift, Dean, his talents and writings under-rated by Dr. Johnſon, III. 392. his obſervation concerning legal precedents, II. 104.

Sydney, Algernon, his deſcription of the ſtate of Italy under the preſent deſpotic modes of government, I. 52, 53, 54. vindicated from the charges brought againſt him by ſir John Dalrymple, II. 217—254.

T.

Taxes, in what ſenſe they are to be conſidered as Free Gifts, I. 35, 36.

Tenants in villenage, remarks on their ſituation, I. 74—77.

Thurlow, Edward, attorney-general, claims the privilege of ſpeaking firſt and ſpeaking laſt, in the caſe of the King againſt Horne, II. 112. when raiſed to the peerage and chancellor, oppoſes Mr. Fox's Libel Bill, 167. ſigns a proteſt againſt it, 169.

Treaties with Pruſſia, always injurious to Great Britain, III. 33, 34, 35, 36.

TRIAL BY JURY, its importance, II. 7, 161. Blackſtone's obſervations on that ſubject, 161, 162.

Trials for Libels, the frequent and ſhameful partiality of the Judges in ſuch cauſes, when between the crown and the ſubject, II. 12, 63, 64, 65, 70, 103, 172.

Trinity, doctrine of, remarks relative to it, III. 416, 417.

TUCKER, JOSIAH, Dean of Gloceſter, his miſrepreſentations of the political principles of Mr. Locke, I. 10, 11. his objections to Mr. Locke's principles examined and refuted, 12—140. remarks on his True Baſis of Civil Government, 89, 102.

Tyranny, the right of the people to reſiſt it, in whatever hands the government may be placed, I. 124, 128, 131, 137.

U.

Vaughan, Lord Chief Juſtice, his ſtatement of the fallibility of Judges, and of their occaſional corruption and diſhoneſty, II. 65, 66, 67.

Villiers, George, Duke of Buckingham, his numerous titles and offices, I. 348, 349.

Uſher, Archbiſhop, his teſtimony againſt the Earl of Strafford, at the trial of that nobleman, I. 366.

W.

WAR, avoiding it ſhould be one of the prime objects of a wiſe adminiſtration, III. 33, 43, 236.

WAR and PEACE, the danger of inveſting kings or miniſters of ſtate with the excluſive power of making them, III. 43, 44, 45, 46.

WARTON, Dr. JOSEPH, his obſervation concerning Milton's Lycidas, III. 401, 402.

WARTON, THOMAS, remarks relative to his edition of Milton's ſmaller Poems, III. 376, 377.

WATTS, Dr. remarks relative to him, III. 403, 404.

WENTWORTH, PETER, his character, II. 256.

Whitaker, Mr. his account of the old Britiſh monarchies, I. 247, 248, 249.

WILKES, JOHN, Dr. Johnſon's ſtatements concerning him, I. 157, 161. farther particulars relative to him, II. 158, 226.

Williams, Sir William, his ſtatement reſpecting the law of libels, and the mode by which he acquired his knowledge of that ſpecies of law, II. 75, 76.

Y.

YOUNG, Dr. remarks relative to him, III. 404, 405.

Z.

Zenger, John Peter, account of the proſecution againſt him, II. 123, 124.

FINIS.

PUBLISHED BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

IN TWO VOLUMES, OCTAVO,

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND REIGN

OF

FREDERICK,

THE THIRD

KING OF PRUSSIA.

THE SECOND EDITION.

PRINTED FOR CHARLES DILLY, IN THE POULTRY.